

DGuzik 03 Leviticus

David Guzik

Book 3 of Bible Commentary: David
Guzik



calibre 1.20.0

1

Then the LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the Meeting Tent:

Guzik - Leviticus 1:1-17

Leviticus 1 - The Burnt Offering

A. Introduction: the idea of sacrifice in ancient Israel.

1. (1) God speaks to Moses from the tabernacle.

Now the LORD called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying,

a. **Now the LORD called to Moses:** The story of Leviticus picks up where Exodus left off.

Israel is still camped out at the base of Mount Sinai, and they will remain there all through the Book of Leviticus.

b. **From the tabernacle of meeting:** This indicates that the tabernacle was now completed. The sacrificial system could now be implemented in detail with the place of sacrifice ready.

2. (2) What to do when you bring an offering to LORD.

"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:

'When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of the livestock; of the herd and of the flock.

a. **When any one of you brings an offering:** In the covenant God made with Israel at Mount Sinai, there were three major facets. The covenant included the *law* Israel had to obey, *sacrifice* to provide for breaking the law, and the *choice* of blessing or curse that would become the script for Israel's history.

i. The sacrificial system was an essential element of the Mosaic covenant, because it was impossible to live up to the requirements of the law. Sin was dealt with through sacrifice.

ii. This was not the beginning of God's sacrificial system. Adam knew of sacrifice (Gen. 3:21), as did Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:3-4), and Noah (Gen. 8:20-21).

iii. The idea of sacrifice to the gods was not unique to Israel. Other nations and cultures practiced sacrifice, often ultimately involving human sacrifice. The universality of sacrifice is evidence that the concept was known to man before the flood, and was carried to different cultures from the survivors of the flood in Noah's day.

b. **Brings an offering to the LORD:** Because sacrifice was already known to Israel, these instructions to the priests are not particularly new - they are mostly a clarification of a foundation that was already known to Israel through the traditions of their fathers.

i. God had a wise timing in bringing the law of the sacrifices at this time. Before the Tabernacle of Meeting was built, there was no one place of sacrifice, and the procedures for sacrifice couldn't really be codified. But now with the completion of the Tabernacle, Israel could bring their sacrifice to one place and follow the same procedures for each sacrifice.

ii. The first seven chapters of Leviticus deal with personal, voluntary offerings. Chapters 1 through 5 are mostly instructions to the people who bring the offering, and chapters 6 and 7 are mostly instructions to the priests concerning offerings.

c. **You shall bring an offering of the livestock - of the herd and of the flock:** This means that an Israelite worshipper could not offer a "wild" animal. They could only bring domesticated livestock from their herds. This shows that an offering to God must *cost* something.

B. The procedure for the Burnt Offering.

1. (3) Bringing the animal for the burnt offering.

'If his offering *is* a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD.

a. **If his offering is a burnt sacrifice:** The burnt offering, as its name implies, was completely burnt before the LORD. It was a

total sacrifice. The burnt offering was a general offering of propitiation and consecration to God.

b. **Let him offer a male:** The animal offered had to be a **male**, because male animals were thought to be stronger and therefore more valuable.

c. **Without blemish:** The animal must not have any obvious defect. God would not accept a defective sacrifice. We have a tendency to always want to give God "second best" - if not our third or fourth best. Yet this principle shows that God would not receive sacrifice marked by defect.

i. There are countless anecdotes and funny stories illustrating this tendency to give God lesser things. These include the story of the farmer whose cow gave birth to twins, and he swore he would give one of the calves to God. He didn't decide which one to give to God, until one day one of the calves died.

He said to his wife: "Guess what? God's calf died today!"

ii. Israel did not always live up to this standard, and much later the Prophet Malachi rebuked Israel for offering God sub-standard sacrifices: *And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?*

Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably? (Mal. 1:8)

iii. Jesus fulfilled this standard perfectly, being a sinless and pure sacrifice without blemish (Joh. 8:29, 8:46, 14:30, and 15:10).

d. **He shall offer it of his own free will:** God did not want a coerced sacrifice. Each animal had to be freely

offered. This illustrates the principle that God wants our hearts, freely given to Him.

2. (4) The transference of guilt.

Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.

a. Then he shall put his hand on the head

of the burnt offering: This was a clear picture of identification with the sacrificial victim.

Through this symbol, the guilty one transferred his guilt to the sacrificial victim that would die for the sin of the offerer.

i. It was not enough that the victim merely died. The one receiving atonement had to actively identify himself with the sacrifice. In the same way, it is not enough to know that Jesus died for the sins of the world. The one who would receive His atonement must "reach out" and identify himself with Jesus.

b. To make atonement for him: The idea behind the Hebrew word for atonement (*kophar*) is to cover. The idea is that an individual's sin is covered over by the blood of the sacrificial victim.

i. Leviticus is a book all about atonement.

"The word *kipper* ("to make atonement") is used almost fifty times in Leviticus . . . It is used about fifty times more in the rest of the OT." (Harris) ii. But there is a difference between the Old Testament idea of atonement and the New

Testament idea. In the Old Testament, sin is "covered over" until redemption was completed by Jesus on the cross. In the New

Testament, sin is done away with - and a true "at-one-ment" was accomplished by Jesus' sacrifice.

iii. Significantly, the burnt offering was more about total surrender to God than about sin.

Yet this shows that when we come to God with total surrender, we sure realize we must deal with sin.

3. (5-9) The procedure for offering a bull as a burnt offering. He shall kill the bull before the LORD; and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar that *is by* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. And he shall skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces. The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar, and lay the wood in order on the fire. Then the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat in order on the wood that *is* on the fire upon the altar; but he shall wash its entrails and its legs with water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

a. **He shall kill the bull:** It seems as though the one who brought the offering - who laid his hands on the head of the bull - was the same one expected to actually kill the animal.

i. In each place the laying of hands on the sacrificial victim is mentioned (Lev. 1:4-5, 3:2, 3:8, 4:4, 4:15, and 4:24), the killing of the sacrifice - **by the one who put their hands on the head** - is mentioned also.

ii. Of course, the priest would assist as necessary, and the priests would do the heavy work of skinning and cutting the animal up. But the one who brought the offering delivered the deathblow. The individual Israelite cut the jugular vein of the bull, in the presence of the priests at the Tabernacle of Meeting. This was a solemn testimony to the need for sacrifice.

b. **He shall kill the bull before the LORD:** This is the second occurrence of the phrase **before the LORD** in Leviticus; it occurs more than 60 times - more than any other book in the Bible. What happens in Leviticus happens **before the LORD**, and every sacrifice that was made was to be made **before the LORD**.

i. How our own sacrifices to God would

change if we did them with the understanding that we do it **before the LORD!** *For who is this who pledged his heart to approach Me?' says the LORD.* (Jer. 30:21)

c. Bring the blood and sprinkle the blood

all around: The blood of the animal - representing the life of the animal (Lev. 17:11) - was sprinkled on the altar of sacrifice.

d. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire: The rest of the animal, having been washed from any excrement or impurity, was burnt on the altar. The totality of the offering, burnt before God, was **a sweet aroma** before God's throne.

i. This reflects the heart behind the burnt offering. It was a desire to give everything to God, an "I surrender all" attitude. When everything was burnt before the LORD on the altar, there was nothing held back.

ii. Taken together, all this shows that there was an order to the sacrifice God wanted respected! This was not a "do your own thing" matter. You couldn't offer a burnt offering, a grain offering, a peace offering, a sin offering, or a guilt offering just anyway you wanted to. You had to bring your offering the way God wants you to.

4. (10-13) The procedure for offering a sheep or a goat as a burnt offering.

'If his offering *is* of the flocks; of the sheep or of the goats; as a burnt sacrifice, he shall bring a male without blemish. He shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the LORD; and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. And he shall cut it into its pieces, with its head and its fat; and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that *is* on the fire upon the altar; but he shall wash the entrails and the legs with water. Then the priest shall

bring *it* all and burn *it* on the altar; it *is* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

a. **If his offering is of the flocks; of the sheep or of the goats:** The procedure was essentially the same as that for offering a bull, except that a sheep or a goat was not skinned.

Since the entire animal was to be burned, only the impurities of the **entrails** had to be washed before the sacrifice was burnt. A bull presented as a burnt offering had to be skinned (Lev. 1:6), but not a sheep or a goat.

5. (14-17) The procedure for offering a bird as a burnt offering.

'And if the burnt sacrifice of his offering to the LORD *is* of birds, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves or young pigeons. The priest shall bring it to the altar, wring off its head, and burn *it* on the altar; its blood shall be drained out at the side of the altar. And he shall remove its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar on the east side, into the place for ashes. Then he shall split it at its wings, *but* shall not divide *it* completely; and the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood that *is* on the fire. It *is* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

a. **If the burnt sacrifice of his offering to the LORD is of birds:** This procedure followed the same principles, adapted to the sacrifice of birds instead of bulls, sheep, or goats. The animal was killed and its blood was offered, the carcass was prepared, and then burnt before the LORD.

b. **He shall bring his offering of turtledoves or young pigeons:** God would not accept *any* kind of bird, but He would accept **turtledoves or young pigeons** as sacrifices. The fact that God would accept a bull, a goat, a sheep, or a bird shows that God was more interested in the heart than in the actual animal being offered. If the sacrifice was made with the right heart, God accepted the poor man's bird as much as the rich man's bull.

i. At the same time, the sacrifice had to correspond with what one could afford. It was wrong for a rich man to only offer a bird as a burnt offering. Therefore, when God made His offering for sin, He gave the richest, most costly thing He could - Himself.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When someone among you presents an offering to the LORD, you must present your offering from the domesticated animals, either from the herd or from the flock.

3 “‘If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd he must present it as a flawless male; he must present it at the entrance of the Meeting Tent for its acceptance before the LORD. **4** He must lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf. **5** Then the one presenting the offering must slaughter the bull before the LORD, and the sons of Aaron, the priests, must present the blood and splash the blood against the sides of the altar which is at the entrance of the Meeting Tent. **6** Next, the one presenting the offering must skin the burnt offering and cut it into parts, **7** and the sons of Aaron, the priest, must put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire. **8** Then the sons of Aaron, the priests, must arrange the parts with the head and the suet on the wood that is in the fire on the altar. **9** Finally, the one presenting the offering must wash its entrails and its legs in water and the priest must offer all of it up in smoke on the altar – it is a burnt offering, a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

10 “‘If his offering is from the flock for a burnt offering – from the sheep or the goats – he must present a flawless male, **11** and must slaughter it on the north side of the altar before the LORD, and the sons of Aaron, the priests, will splash its blood against the altar’s sides. **12** Next, the one presenting the offering must cut it into parts, with its head and its suet, and the priest must arrange them on the wood

which is in the fire, on the altar. **13** Then the one presenting the offering must wash the entrails and the legs in water, and the priest must present all of it and offer it up in smoke on the altar – it is a burnt offering, a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

14 “If his offering to the LORD is a burnt offering from the birds, he must present his offering from the turtledoves or from the young pigeons. **15** The priest must present it at the altar, pinch off its head and offer the head up in smoke on the altar, and its blood must be drained out against the side of the altar. **16** Then the priest must remove its entrails by cutting off its tail feathers, and throw them to the east side of the altar into the place of fatty ashes, **17** and tear it open by its wings without dividing it into two parts. Finally, the priest must offer it up in smoke on the altar on the wood which is in the fire – it is a burnt offering, a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

1 “When a person presents a grain offering to the LORD, his offering must consist of choice wheat flour, and he must pour olive oil on it and put frankincense on it.

Guzik - Leviticus 2:1-16

Leviticus 2 - The Grain Offering

A. The procedure for the grain offering.

1. (1-3) The presentation of the grain offering.

When anyone offers a grain offering to the LORD, his offering shall be *of* fine flour. And he shall pour oil on it, and put frankincense on it. He shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests, one of whom shall take from it his handful of fine flour and oil with all the frankincense. And the priest shall burn *it as* a memorial on the altar, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. The rest of the grain offering *shall be* Aaron's and his sons'. *It is* most holy of the offerings to the LORD

made by fire.

a. **When anyone offers a grain offering to**

the LORD: The grain offering was typically fine flour, mixed with a bit of oil and frankincense. A portion of the flour was burnt before the LORD

on the altar. The remainder was given to the priests for their own use in making bread for the priest and his family (**the rest of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons**).

b. A memorial on the altar, an offering

made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD: God allowed and received this bloodless sacrifice as an expression of thanksgiving, not as atonement for sin. In an agrarian society this was a fitting symbol of thanks for God's faithful provision.

2. (4-10) Different types of grain offering.

And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, *it shall be* unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. But if your offering *is* a grain offering *baked* in a pan, *it shall be of* fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil. You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; *it is* a grain offering. If your offering *is* a grain offering *baked* in a covered pan, it shall be made *of* fine flour with oil. You shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the LORD. And when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar. Then the priest shall take from the grain offering a memorial portion, and burn *it* on the altar. *It is* an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD. And what is left of the grain offering *shall be* Aaron's and his sons'. *It is* most holy of the offerings to the LORD made by fire.

a. If you bring as an offering a grain

offering baked in the oven: A grain offering could also be brought in the form of fine flour already cooked. It could be baked in an oven, cooked on a flat griddle, or in a covered pan.

i. No matter what its form, the grain offering had to be prepared at home. We can

imagine an ancient Jewish woman carefully preparing the best her kitchen could make and presenting it to God as a sacrifice. This expression of devotion to God began *at home* and if offered with the right heart, it was **a sweet aroma to the LORD**.

ii. The **covered pan** worked like a modern deep fat fryer. "Authorities suggest that the cereal offering cooked in the [covered pan]

would look rather like a modern deep-fried doughnut." (Harrison)

b. **What is left of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons:** If the grain offering was brought as fine flour or as prepared bread a portion went to the priests for their sustenance.

B. Special instructions regarding the grain offering.

1. (11) The addition of leaven or honey was prohibited.

No grain offering which you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering to the LORD made by fire.

a. **No grain offering which you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven:**

Leaven was prohibited because it was a type of sin. This leaven wasn't merely yeast, but a pinch of dough left over from the previous batch, as in the making of sourdough bread.

i. This was how bread was commonly leavened in the ancient world, and a little pinch of dough from the old lump could make a whole new lump of dough rise and puff up. Therefore the work of leaven was considered an illustration of the work of sin and pride. The presence of a little can corrupt a large amount.

ii. "Sometimes the Jew used the word leaven much as we would use the term *original sin*, or the natural evil of human nature." (Barclay in his commentary on Mark)

b. Nor any honey in any offering to the

LORD made by fire: Honey was not allowed because it was a favorite sacrifice to pagan deities. God did not want to be worshipped after the customs of the pagans.

i. Leaven can make things artificially sour and honey can make things artificially sweet. God did not want either of these in sacrifice.

When we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice He wants us to come just as we are, without artificially making ourselves more sour or sweet.

2. (12) The offering of firstfruits.

As for the offering of the firstfruits, you shall offer them to the LORD, but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma.

a. **As for the offering of the firstfruits:** Firstfruits were to be offered, but not as other grain offerings. They were never to be **burned on the altar**, but offered with a different procedure.

3. (13) Each grain offering must include salt.

And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.

a. **Every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt:** Salt was an important part of the offering because it spoke of *purity*, of *preservation*, and of *expense*. Every sacrifice offered to God should be *pure*, should be *enduring*, and should *cost* something. In this one verse God repeated the idea three times.

i. As a preservative salt will arrest the normal operations of the flesh. It is the

nature of flesh to spoil, but salt-cured meats stay good.

ii. Salt also spoke of friendship. According to ancient custom, a bond of friendship was established through the eating of salt. It was said that once you had eaten a man's salt, you were his friend for life. God wanted every sacrifice to be a reminder of relationship.

b. **The salt of the covenant of your God:** Therefore a covenant of salt had specific characteristics. It was:

- A *pure* covenant (salt stays pure as a chemical compound).
- An *enduring* covenant (salt makes things preserve and endure).
- A *valuable* covenant (salt was expensive).

i. Spurgeon on the **covenant** of salt: "By which was meant that it was an unchangeable, incorruptible covenant, which would endure as salt makes a thing to endure, so that it is not liable to putrefy or corrupt."

ii. The idea of the covenant of salt is repeated in Num. 18:19 and 2Ch. 13:5.

4. (14-16) Procedure for a grain offering of firstfruits.

If you offer a grain offering of your firstfruits to the LORD, you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits green heads of grain roasted on the fire, grain beaten from full heads. And you shall put oil on it, and lay frankincense on it. It *is* a grain offering. Then the priest shall burn the memorial portion: *part* of its beaten grain and *part* of its oil, with all the frankincense, as an offering made by fire to the LORD.

a. **If you offer a grain offering of your**

firstfruits to the LORD: In Lev. 2:12 God told Israel to *not* bring firstfruit offerings in the same manner as grain offerings. Here He tells them *how* to bring a firstfruits offering.

i. The *idea* of firstfruits was important. The first of the harvest and the firstborn of livestock belonged to the LORD. This could

be considered risky giving because the land might not yield much more produce, and the cow or ewe might not give birth again - yet the first still belonged to God. The LORD promised to bless this giving of the firstfruits and firstborn in faith: *Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.* (Pro. 3:9-10)

b. **You shall put oil on it, and lay**

frankincense on it: These were thought to sweeten the sacrifice and make it more costly.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 Then he must bring it to the sons of Aaron, the priests, and the priest must scoop out from there a handful of its choice wheat flour and some of its olive oil in addition to all of its frankincense, and the priest must offer its memorial portion up in smoke on the altar - it is a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **3** The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and to his sons - it is most holy from the gifts of the LORD.

4 “When you present an offering of grain baked in an oven, it must be made of choice wheat flour baked into unleavened loaves mixed with olive oil or unleavened wafers smeared with olive oil. **5** If your offering is a grain offering made on the griddle, it must be choice wheat flour mixed with olive oil, unleavened. **6** Crumble it in pieces and pour olive oil on it - it is a grain offering. **7** If your offering is a grain offering made in a pan, it must be made of choice wheat flour deep fried in olive oil.

8 “You must bring the grain offering that must be made from these to the LORD. Present it to the priest, and he will bring it to the altar. **9** Then the priest must take up from the grain offering its memorial portion and offer it up in smoke on the altar - it is a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **10** The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and to his sons - it is most holy from the gifts of the LORD.

11 “No grain offering which you present to the LORD can be made with yeast, for you must not offer up in smoke any yeast or honey as a gift to the LORD. **12** You can present them to the LORD as an offering of first fruit, but they must not go up to the altar for a soothing aroma.

13 Moreover, you must season every one of your grain offerings with salt; you must not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be missing from your grain offering – on every one of your grain offerings you must present salt.

14 “If you present a grain offering of first ripe grain to the LORD, you must present your grain offering of first ripe grain as soft kernels roasted in fire – crushed bits of fresh grain. **15** And you must put olive oil on it and set frankincense on it – it is a grain offering. **16** Then the priest must offer its memorial portion up in smoke – some of its crushed bits, some of its olive oil, in addition to all of its frankincense – it is a gift to the LORD.

1 “Now if his offering is a peace offering sacrifice, if he presents an offering from the herd, he must present before the LORD a flawless male or a female.

Guzik - Leviticus 3:1-17

Leviticus 3 - The Peace Offering

A. The procedure for the Peace Offering.

1. (1-5) Offering a bull or a cow as a peace offering.

When his offering *is* a sacrifice of a peace offering, if he offers *it* of the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD. And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood all around on the altar. Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire to the LORD. The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; and Aaron's sons

shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which *is* on the wood that *is* on the fire, as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.

a. **When his offering is a sacrifice of a**

peace offering: In contrast to the burnt offering, a peace offering sacrifice could be either a **male or female** animal. However, the animal still had to be **without blemish**.

b. **Sprinkle the blood all around on the**

altar . . . The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails: In the peace offering, the blood of the animal was offered to God along with the fat (which was

considered to be the prime portion).

i. There was no mention made of what to do with meat portions of the animal. This was because the meat portion was to be shared, with a part given to the priests and part given to the one who brought the offering who ate it as part of a fellowship meal with God.

ii. This was not an offering to *make* peace with God (this was the purpose of the sin offering of chapter four), but an offering to *enjoy* peace with God. The whole reason Jesus made peace between the Father and the believer is so that the peace could be enjoyed.

iii. The greatest peace offering ever made happened when Solomon dedicated the temple, offering 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep (1Ki. 8:63). That must have been history's greatest barbecue. Hezekiah gave a festival where 2,000 bulls and 17,000 sheep were given for peace offerings (2Ch. 30:24).

2. (6-11) Offering a sheep as a peace offering.

If his offering as a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD *is* of the flock, *whether* male or female, he shall offer it without

blemish. If he offers a lamb as his offering, then he shall offer it before the LORD. And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. Then he shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as an offering made by fire to the LORD, its fat *and* the whole fat tail which he shall remove close to the backbone. And the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; and the priest shall burn *them* on the altar *as food*, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

a. **If he offers a lamb as his offering:** The procedure was generally the same as the offering of a bull or cow. The blood and the fat were given to the LORD, while the meat portions were for the one who brought the offering and for the priest.

b. **Its fat and the whole fat tail which he shall remove close to the backbone:** This offering of the **whole fat tail** was significant.

That portion of the animal was considered a delicacy and could weigh as much as 60 pounds (27 kilograms).

3. (12-16) Offering a goat as a peace offering.

And if his offering *is* a goat, then he shall offer it before the LORD. He shall lay his hand on its head and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. Then he shall offer from it his offering, as an offering made by fire to the LORD. The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; and the priest shall burn them on the altar *as food*, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma; all the fat *is* the Lord's.

4. (17) Conclusion: The fat and the blood belong to God.

This shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall eat neither fat nor blood.

a. **You shall eat neither fat nor blood:** There was a *spiritual* significance to this command relevant to the peace offering. We enjoy peace with God by giving Him the best (represented by the fat) and by giving Him our lives (represented by the blood).

i. Even as it was impossible to remove *all* the blood from an animal, so was it impossible to remove *all* the fat from meat - this speaks of removing as much as one can practically.

b. **You shall eat neither fat nor blood:** There was a *practical* significance to this command. The prohibition of eating fat was good for Israel from the standpoint of blood-cholesterol and heart disease. It was especially good because tapeworms were often found in the fatty tissues and by obeying this command, the ancient Israelites avoided these dangerous parasites.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** He must lay his hand on the head of his offering and slaughter it at the entrance of the Meeting Tent, and the sons of Aaron, the priests, must splash the blood against the altar's sides. **3** Then the one presenting the offering must present a gift to the LORD from the peace offering sacrifice: He must remove the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that surrounds the entrails, **4** the two kidneys with the fat on their sinews, and the protruding lobe on the liver (which he is to remove along with the kidneys). **5** Then the sons of Aaron must offer it up in smoke on the altar atop the burnt offering that is on the wood in the fire as a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

6 "If his offering for a peace offering sacrifice to the LORD is from the flock, he must present a flawless male or female. **7** If he presents a sheep as his offering, he must present it before the LORD. **8** He must lay his hand on the head of his

offering and slaughter it before the Meeting Tent, and the sons of Aaron must splash its blood against the altar's sides. **9** Then he must present a gift to the LORD from the peace offering sacrifice: He must remove all the fatty tail up to the end of the spine, the fat covering the entrails, and all the fat on the entrails, **10** the two kidneys with the fat on their sinews, and the protruding lobe on the liver (which he is to remove along with the kidneys). **11** Then the priest must offer it up in smoke on the altar as a food gift to the LORD.

12 "If his offering is a goat he must present it before the LORD, **13** lay his hand on its head, and slaughter it before the Meeting Tent, and the sons of Aaron must splash its blood against the altar's sides. **14** Then he must present from it his offering as a gift to the LORD: the fat which covers the entrails and all the fat on the entrails, **15**

the two kidneys with the fat on their sinews, and the protruding lobe on the liver (which he is to remove along with the kidneys). **16** Then the priest must offer them up in smoke on the altar as a food gift for a soothing aroma – all the fat belongs to the LORD. **17** This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all the places where you live: You must never eat any fat or any blood."

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 4:1-35

Leviticus 4 - The Sin Offering

A. The procedure for the Sin Offering.

1. (1-2) The purpose of the Sin Offering.

Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a person sins unintentionally against any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which ought not to be done, and does any of them,' "

a. **If a person sins unintentionally:** The idea is not so much of an accidental sin, but of a sin committed by a person who basically loves God.

The contrast to an unintentional sin is to sin *presumptuously* (Num. 15:30). Literally, this was "to sin with a high hand."

There was no atonement available for the one whose heart was so defiantly turned against the LORD in presumptuous sin. If your heart wasn't turned towards the LORD, then all the animals in the world sacrificed on your behalf did you no good.

2. (3-12) The sin offering for a priest.

If the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD for his sin which he has sinned a young bull without blemish as a sin offering. He shall bring the bull to the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, lay his hand on the bull's head, and kill the bull before the LORD. Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting. The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. He shall take from it all the fat of the bull as the sin offering. The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat which *is* on the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove, as it was taken from the bull of the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn them on the altar of the burnt offering.

But the bull's hide and all its flesh, with its head and legs, its entrails and offal; the whole bull he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn it on wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out it shall be burned.

a. If the anointed priest sins, bringing

guilt on the people: If a priest needed a sin offering made on his behalf, a bull had to be sacrificed on his behalf, with

the priest identifying with the victim through the laying on of hands.

i. The presence of a separate ritual of cleansing for the sin of the priest shows that they had a great accountability before the LORD and were, in a sense, judged

according to a stricter measure.

b. Sprinkle some of the blood seven times

before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary: The blood of this bull was applied to the veil in the tabernacle of meeting, to the altar of incense, and to the altar of sacrifice outside the tabernacle.

i. Sin is an offense against the holiness of God, and so the veil guarding His holy presence must receive sacrificial blood.

ii. Sin affects our prayer life, and so the altar of incense representing the prayers of God's people must receive sacrificial blood.

iii. Sin makes our atonement necessary, so the altar of the burnt offering - the place of atonement - must receive sacrificial blood.

c. He shall take from it all the fat of the bull as the sin offering: The fatty portions of the animal were offered to God. In this, the best was once again dedicated to God after the blood covered the sin.

d. The bull's hide and all its flesh . . . burn it on wood with fire: The valuable hide and the meat of the bull were burnt outside the camp, along with the worthless portions of the bull. It could not be offered to God, but it was burned as if it were a worthless thing.

i. All selfish motives had to be removed in the sin offering. If a priest brought the offering, the whole offering had to be destroyed. If a non-priest brought the offering, the priest could eat of it, but not the one bringing the sacrifice. You couldn't bring a sin offering because you

wanted
meat or leather, but only because you
wanted to get right with God. This
emphasized the idea that there is no benefit
to our sin.

ii. Paul expressed this attitude of heart in

Phi. 3:7-8: *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*

3. (13-21) The sin offering for the whole
congregation of Israel.

Now if the whole congregation of Israel sins
unintentionally, and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the
assembly, and they have done *something against* any of the
commandments of the LORD *in anything* which should not
be done, and are guilty; when the sin which they have
committed becomes known, then the assembly
shall offer a young bull for the sin, and bring it before the
tabernacle of meeting. And the elders of the congregation
shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the
LORD. Then the bull shall be killed before the LORD. The
anointed priest shall bring some of the bull's blood to the
tabernacle of meeting. Then the priest shall dip his finger in
the blood and sprinkle *it* seven times before the LORD, in
front of the veil. And he shall put *some* of the blood on the
horns of the altar which *is* before the LORD, which *is* in the
tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining
blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at
the door of the tabernacle of meeting. He shall take all the
fat from it and burn *it* on the altar. And he shall do with the
bull as he did with the bull as a sin offering; thus he shall do
with it. So the priest shall make atonement for them, and it
shall be forgiven

them. Then he shall carry the bull outside the camp, and burn it as he burned the first bull. It *is* a sin offering for the assembly.

a. **If the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally:** The procedure was the same as the sin offering on behalf of a priest, except that the **elders of the congregation** laid their hands on the head of the bull, representing the nation.

4. (22-26) The sin offering for a ruler of the people.

When a ruler has sinned, and done *something* unintentionally *against* any of the commandments of the LORD his God *in anything* which should not be done, and is guilty, or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a male without blemish. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the goat, and kill it at the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD. It *is* a sin offering. The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering. And he shall burn all its fat on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

a. **When a ruler has sinned:** The procedure was similar to, yet distinct from the offering for a priest or the nation at large. The sacrificial victim was a male goat, and the blood was only applied to the altar of burnt offering, and the fat was burnt on the altar - as in the peace offering.

i. According to Lev. 6:24-30, the rest of the animal was available for the priest.

5. (27-35) The sin offering for a common man or woman.

If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing *something against* any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which ought not to be done, and is guilty, or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a

kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering.

Then the priest shall take *some* of its blood with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all *the remaining* blood at the base of the altar. He shall remove all its fat, as fat is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma to the LORD. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. If he brings a lamb as his sin offering, he shall bring a female without blemish.

Then he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill it as a sin offering at the place where they kill the burnt offering. The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put *it* on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all *the remaining* blood at the base of the altar. He shall remove all its fat, as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering. Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire to the LORD. So the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

a. If anyone of the common people sins

unintentionally: This was the same procedure for a ruler of the people, except that a female goat or a lamb could be offered instead of a male goat.

b. Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by

fire to the LORD: Again, presumably, the rest of the animal was available for the priest. This meant that the sin offering for a civil ruler or common man was least costly than the sin offering for a priest or the nation as a whole, and that the only profit a priest could gain from his own sin offering was spiritual, not material.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 “Tell the Israelites, ‘When a person sins by straying unintentionally from any of the Lord’s commandments which must not be violated, and violates any one of them - **3** “‘If the high priest sins so that the people are guilty, on account of the sin he has committed he must present a flawless young bull to the LORD for a sin offering. **4** He must bring the bull to the entrance of the Meeting Tent before the LORD, lay his hand on the head of the bull, and slaughter the bull before the LORD. **5** Then that high priest must take some of the blood of the bull and bring it to the Meeting Tent. **6** The priest must dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of it seven times before the LORD

toward the front of the veil-canopy of the sanctuary. **7** The priest must put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense that is before the LORD in the Meeting Tent, and all the rest of the bull’s blood he must pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the Meeting Tent.

8 “‘Then he must take up all the fat from the sin offering bull: the fat covering the entrails and all the fat surrounding the entrails, **9** the two kidneys with the fat on their sinews, and the protruding lobe on the liver (which he is to remove along with the kidneys) **10** - just as it is taken from the ox of the peace offering sacrifice - and the priest must offer them up in smoke on the altar of burnt offering. **11** But the hide of the bull, all its flesh along with its head and its legs, its entrails, and its dung - **12** all the rest of the bull - he must bring outside the camp to a ceremonially clean place, to the fatty ash pile, and he must burn it on a wood fire; it must be burned on the fatty ash pile.

13 “‘If the whole congregation of Israel strays unintentionally and the matter is not noticed by the assembly, and they violate one of the Lord’s commandments, which must not be violated, so they

become guilty, **14** the assembly must present a young bull for a sin offering when the sin they have committed becomes known. They must bring it before the Meeting Tent, **15** the elders of the congregation must lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and someone must slaughter the bull before the LORD. **16**

Then the high priest must bring some of the blood of the bull to the Meeting Tent, **17** and that priest must dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD toward the front of the veil-canopy.

18 He must put some of the blood on the horns of the altar which is before the LORD in the Meeting Tent, and all the rest of the blood he must pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the Meeting Tent.

19 “Then the priest must take all its fat and offer the fat up in smoke on the altar. **20** He must do with the rest of the bull just as he did with the bull of the sin offering; this is what he must do with it. So the priest will make atonement on their behalf and they will be forgiven. **21** He must bring the rest of the bull outside the camp and burn it just as he burned the first bull – it is the sin offering of the assembly.

22 “Whenever a leader, by straying unintentionally, sins and violates one of the commandments of the LORD his God which must not be violated, and he pleads guilty, **23**

or his sin that he committed is made known to him, he must bring a flawless male goat as his offering. **24** He must lay his hand on the head of the male goat and slaughter it in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered before the LORD – it is a sin offering. **25** Then the priest must take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and he must pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering. **26** Then the priest must offer all of its fat up in smoke on the altar like the fat of the peace offering sacrifice. So the priest will make atonement on his behalf for his sin and he will be forgiven.

27 “If an ordinary individual sins by straying unintentionally when he violates one of the Lord’s commandments which must not be violated, and he pleads guilty **28** or his sin that he committed is made known to him, he must bring a flawless female goat as his offering for the sin that he committed. **29** He must lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and slaughter the sin offering in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered. **30**

Then the priest must take some of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and he must pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar.

31 Then he must remove all of its fat (just as fat was removed from the peace offering sacrifice) and the priest must offer it up in smoke on the altar for a soothing aroma to the LORD. So the priest will make atonement on his behalf and he will be forgiven.

32 “But if he brings a sheep as his offering, for a sin offering, he must bring a flawless female. **33** He must lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and slaughter it for a sin offering in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered. **34** Then the priest must take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and he must pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. **35** Then the one who brought the offering must remove all its fat (just as the fat of the sheep is removed from the peace offering sacrifice) and the priest must offer them up in smoke on the altar on top of the other gifts of the LORD.

So the priest will make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed and he will be forgiven.

1 “When a person sins in that he hears a public curse against one who fails to testify and he is a witness (he either saw or knew what had happened) and he does not make it known, then he will bear his punishment for iniquity.

Guzik - Leviticus 5:1-19

Leviticus 5 - The Sin Offering and the Guilt

Offering

A. Specific occasions requiring the sin offering.

1. (1) Failing to be a truthful witness, or in being a false witness.

If a person sins in hearing the utterance of an oath, and *is* a witness, whether he has seen or known *of the matter*, if he does not tell *it*, he bears guilt.

a. **If a person sins in hearing the utterance of an oath, and is a witness, whether he has seen or known of the matter:** It wasn't enough to merely not tell lies. God also required His people to make the truth known, so even if one merely *knew about a lie*, they were responsible to make the truth known.

b. **If he does not tell it, he bears guilt:** Therefore it was the duty of someone who was a witness to come forward and tell the truth about the matter. "In Israel all the people were to be involved in seeing that justice was done.

Not to witness was a sin." (Harris)

i. We can say that the same principle applies to our witness of Jesus Christ. It isn't enough that we refrain from actively denying Jesus or lying about our relationship with Him. We must also take every opportunity to tell the truth about Jesus.

2. (2-3) Ceremonial uncleanness.

Or if a person touches any unclean thing, whether *it is* the carcass of an unclean beast, or the carcass of unclean livestock, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and he is unaware of it, he also shall be unclean and guilty. Or if he touches human uncleanness; whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled,

and he is unaware of it; when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty.

a. **If a person touches any unclean thing:** The cleansing of the sin offering was also necessary when a person became ceremonially unclean through touching **any unclean thing**.

b. **Whether it is the carcass of an unclean beast . . . Or if he touches human**

uncleanness: There were several things that might make a person ceremonially unclean.

These included touching the **carcass of an unclean** animal or a person who was already ceremonially unclean. The sin offering was a remedy for this uncleanness.

3. (4) Swearing a false oath.

Or if a person swears, speaking thoughtlessly with *his* lips to do evil or to do good, whatever *it is* that a man may pronounce by an oath, and he is unaware of it; when he realizes *it*, then he shall be guilty in any of these *matters*.

a. **If a person swears, speaking**

thoughtlessly: A careless promise was still a promise before the LORD and had to be observed. If the promise was not kept it had to be atoned for by a sin offering.

b. **When he realizes it, then he shall be**

guilty: When we are aware of our broken vows we must repent of them. It is common to make vows and promises in the Christian that are not kept, and when we see this we must repent and trust in the atoning, covering blood of Jesus to bring forgiveness.

i. Think of these common examples of broken vows:

- More time in prayer
- More intercession for others
- More devotional reading
- More intense Bible study

- More personal witness
- More faithful tithing
- Better example to others
- More patience with the children
- A vow to personal purity in sexual matters

ii. It may not be wrong to make such vows.

They may be the legitimate expression of a move of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. Yet if the vow is not kept, it must be confessed as sin and repented of.

4. (5-13) How to make the sin offering.

And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these *matters*, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that *thing*; and he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin.

If he is not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring to the LORD, for his trespass which he has committed, two turtledoves or two young pigeons: one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. And he shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer *that which is* for the sin offering first, and wring off its head from its neck, but shall not divide *it* completely. Then he shall sprinkle *some* of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, and the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar. It *is* a sin offering. And he shall offer the second *as* a burnt offering according to the prescribed manner. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him. But if he is not able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering. He shall put no oil on it, nor shall he put frankincense on it, for it *is* a sin offering. Then he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it as a

memorial portion, and burn *it* on the altar according to the offerings made by fire to the LORD. It *is* a sin offering. The priest shall make atonement for him, for his sin that he has committed in any of these matters; and it shall be forgiven him. *The rest* shall be the priest's as a grain offering.

a. **When he is guilty:** This really has the idea of "when he realizes his guilt." Though a person is guilty of sin the moment he commits it, he has no idea he needs to get it right until he *realizes* his sin.

b. **He shall confess:** This was an important part of the sin offering; to confess meant one would agree with God that the sin was wrong.

Confession of sin is still an important principle for clearing away sin that hinders our fellowship with God.

c. **He who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine**

flour as a sin offering: Cleansing from sin was available to everyone, even if they couldn't offer a sheep or a goat. If a man was too poor to offer two birds, even fine flour could be offered as a sin offering.

i. When we see how strongly the principle of atonement by sacrifice is emphasized in the Old Testament, many people wonder why the Jewish people today no longer make sacrifice. The answer is that they believe their good works will substitute for animal sacrifice.

ii. "Indeed, when the second temple fell, the rabbis, denied an altar in Jerusalem, came to the conclusion that gifts and prayers were as acceptable as animal sacrifice." (Harris) B. The Guilt Offering.

1. (14-16) The procedure for the Guilt Offering.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "If a person commits a trespass, and sins

unintentionally in regard to the holy things of the LORD, then he shall bring to the LORD as his

trespass offering a ram without blemish from the flocks, with your valuation in shekels of silver according to the shekel of the sanctuary, as a trespass offering. And he shall make restitution for the harm that he has done in regard to the holy thing, and shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest. So the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him."

a. **If a person commits a trespass:** The guilt offering was essentially the same procedure

used in the sin offering, except that the guilt offering was used when someone had sinned **in regard to the holy things**. This spoke of some type of desecration of the tabernacle or its associated items.

b. **He shall make restitution for the harm that he has done in regard to the holy**

thing: When holy things had been desecrated in some way, a mere sin offering was not enough.

Restitution was also required, paying back what was lost plus twenty percent (**he shall add one-fifth to it**).

i. "If one has been unfaithful in the holy things of Jehovah it is not enough that one

should confess and bring a sin-offering.

Restitution must be made for the wrong

done; it must be put right. There was

something due to God that was not rendered

in its season, and things will not be right until it is rendered."

(Coates)

ii. With the guilt offering, the priest was

allowed to keep the hide of a bull that was

sacrificed (Lev. 7:8).

2. (17-19) The necessity of the guilt offering even when a person did not know they had sinned in regard to the holy things.

If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the

commandments of the LORD, though he does not

know *it*, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity. And he shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know *it*, and it shall be forgiven him. It is a trespass offering; he has certainly trespassed against the LORD.

a. Though he does not know it, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity: If someone desecrated the holy things of the tabernacle, "I didn't know" was not an acceptable excuse. They had to still make sacrifice to atone for their sin.

b. So the priest shall make atonement for him regarding his ignorance in which he erred and did not know it: *Ignorance* can be sin. It is no excuse; often it is sin and must be atoned for.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 Or when there is a person who touches anything ceremonially unclean, whether the carcass of an unclean wild animal, or the carcass of an unclean domesticated animal, or the carcass of an unclean creeping thing, even if he did not realize it, but he himself has become unclean and is guilty; **3** or when he touches human uncleanness with regard to anything by which he can become unclean, even if he did not realize it, but he himself has later come to know it and is guilty; **4** or when a person swears an oath, speaking thoughtlessly with his lips, whether to do evil or to do good, with regard to anything which the individual might speak thoughtlessly in an oath, even if he did not realize it, but he himself has later come to know it and is guilty with regard to one of these oaths – **5** when an individual becomes guilty with regard to one of these things he must confess how he has sinned, **6** and he must bring his penalty for guilt to the LORD for his sin that he has committed, a female from the

flock, whether a female sheep or a female goat, for a sin offering. So the priest will make atonement on his behalf for his sin.

7 “If he cannot afford an animal from the flock, he must bring his penalty for guilt for his sin that he has committed, two turtledoves or two young pigeons, to the LORD, one for a sin offering and one for a burnt offering.

8 He must bring them to the priest and present first the one that is for a sin offering. The priest must pinch its head at the nape of its neck, but must not sever the head from the body. **9** Then he must sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the wall of the altar, and the remainder of the blood must be squeezed out at the base of the altar – it is a sin offering. **10** The second bird he must make a burnt offering according to the standard regulation. So the priest will make atonement on behalf of this person for his sin which he has committed, and he will be forgiven.

11 “If he cannot afford two turtledoves or two young pigeons, he must bring as his offering for his sin which he has committed a tenth of an ephah of choice wheat flour for a sin offering. He must not place olive oil on it and he must not put frankincense on it, because it is a sin offering. **12** He must bring it to the priest and the priest must scoop out from it a handful as its memorial portion and offer it up in smoke on the altar on top of the other gifts of the LORD – it is a sin offering. **13** So the priest will make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed by doing one of these things, and he will be forgiven. The remainder of the offering will belong to the priest like the grain offering.”

14 Then the LORD spoke to Moses: **15** “When a person commits a trespass and sins by straying unintentionally from the regulations about the Lord’s holy things, then he must bring his penalty for guilt to the LORD, a flawless ram from the flock, convertible into silver shekels according to the standard of the sanctuary shekel, for a guilt offering. **16** And whatever holy thing he violated he must restore and must

add one fifth to it and give it to the priest. So the priest will make atonement on his behalf with the guilt offering ram and he will be forgiven."

17 "If a person sins and violates any of the Lord's commandments which must not be violated (although he did not know it at the time, but later realizes he is guilty), then he will bear his punishment for iniquity **18** and must bring a flawless ram from the flock, convertible into silver shekels, for a guilt offering to the priest. So the priest will make atonement on his behalf for his error which he committed (although he himself had not known it) and he will be forgiven. **19** It is a guilt offering; he was surely guilty before the LORD."

1 (5:20) Then the LORD spoke to Moses: Guzik - Leviticus 6:1-30

Leviticus 6 - Instructions For the Priests

A. More instances for performing the guilt offering.

1. (1-6) The necessity of the guilt offering when a person sinned against a neighbor by lying or theft.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "If a person sins and commits a trespass against the LORD by lying to his neighbor about what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or about a

pledge, or about a robbery, or if he has extorted from his neighbor, or if he has found what was lost and lies concerning it, and swears falsely; in any one of these things that a man may do in which he sins: then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore what he has stolen, or the thing which he has extorted, or what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he has sworn falsely. He shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, *and* give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering. And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, a ram without blemish from the flock, with your valuation, as a trespass offering, to the priest."

a. **He shall restore what he has stolen:** If a person was guilty of fraud or theft, it wasn't enough that sacrifices cover the guilt of the sin before God. Restitution had to settle the account with the victim of the fraud.

b. **He shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, and give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering:** It wasn't enough to just *return* what was stolen. The thief also had to add 20% (**one-fifth**) to what was stolen as a penalty.

i. Restitution and its accompanying penalty had to be made the same **day of his trespass offering**. This powerfully demonstrated that one could *not* get right with God without also making his wrong right with men.

2. (7) The certainty of forgiveness when the sacrifice is made.

So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD, and he shall be forgiven for any one of these things that he may have done in which he trespasses.

a. **So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD:** This was marvelous assurance for a guilty conscience. The sinner could depend upon this promise and know their sin was covered before the LORD.

i. The New Testament makes a similar statement in light of the New Covenant, found in 1Jo. 1:9: *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

b. **For any one of these things that he may have done:** The emphasis is that *any* sin can be cleansed through atoning sacrifice. Before the perfect work of Jesus on the cross the cleansing was not perfect, but it could be extended to any sin.

B. Specific instructions for the priests regarding the offerings.

1. (8-13) The burnt offering.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

"Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This *is* the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering *shall be* on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his body, and take up the ashes of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.

Then he shall take off his garments, put on other garments, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not be put out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out."

a. **This is the law of the burnt offering:** This offering spoke of consecration. The animal had to remain upon the altar in a slow burn for a long time, tended by the priest (**shall be on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning**).

b. **And the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it:** The long-burning character of the burnt offering is an appropriate illustration of the work of giving ourselves completely to God. Coming to God as a living sacrifice is not a quick work and we may feel that we are roasted on the fire for a long time.

i. "Does the perpetual fire burn on the altar of *thy* heart? Art *thou* ever looking unto Jesus, and beholding, by faith, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world?" (Clarke)

c. **A fire shall always be burning on the**

altar; it shall never go out: The perpetual fire is also connected to the idea that these offerings must be made continually. Before the perfect sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, it was impossible to perfectly complete them.

2. (14-23) The grain offering.

"This *is* the law of the grain offering: The sons of Aaron shall offer it on the altar before the LORD.

He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with its oil, and all the frankincense which *is* on the grain offering, and shall burn *it* on the altar *for* a sweet aroma, as a memorial to the LORD. And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat; with unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of meeting they shall eat it. It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it *as* their portion of My offerings made by fire; it *is* most holy, like the sin offering and the trespass offering. All the males among the children of Aaron may eat it. *It shall be* a statute forever in your generations concerning the offerings made by fire to the LORD. Everyone who touches them must be holy." And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "This *is* the offering of Aaron and his sons, which they shall offer to the LORD, *beginning* on the day when he is anointed: one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a daily grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it at night. It shall be made in a pan with oil. *When it is* mixed, you shall bring it in. The baked pieces of the grain offering you shall offer *for* a sweet aroma to the LORD. The priest from among his sons, who is anointed in his place, shall offer it. *It is* a statute forever to the LORD. It shall be wholly burned. For every grain offering for the priest shall be wholly burned. It shall not be eaten."

a. **This is the law of the grain offering:** A portion of the grain offering belonged to the priests. They and their family ate it as a holy gift.

b. **For every grain offering for the priest shall be wholly burned:** There was a particular grain offering that

was part of the anointing and consecration ceremony for a priest. *This* grain offering was not to be eaten, it was to be **wholly burned** before the LORD.

3. (24-30) The sin offering.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This *is* the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed, the sin offering shall be killed before the LORD. It *is* most holy. The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. In a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of meeting. Everyone who touches its flesh must be holy. And when its blood is sprinkled on any

garment, you shall wash that on which it was sprinkled, in a holy place. But the earthen vessel in which it is boiled shall be broken. And if it is boiled in a bronze pot, it shall be both scoured and rinsed in water. All the males among the priests may eat it. It *is* most holy. But no sin offering from which *any* of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy *place*, shall be eaten. It shall be burned in the fire.'"

a. **This is the law of the sin offering:** A portion of the sin offering was left over, and was to be given to the priests. Anything touched by the sin offering or its blood had to be cleansed in a special manner because the sacrificial victim was thought to be infected with the sin of the one who brought the offering.

b. **But no sin offering from which any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy place, shall be eaten:** Any portion from the sin offering made for national atonement could not be eaten. The whole animal had to be burnt before the LORD. Only portions from a sin offering made on behalf of an individual could be eaten.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 “When a person sins and commits a trespass against the LORD by deceiving his fellow citizen in regard to something held in trust, or a pledge, or something stolen, or by extorting something from his fellow citizen, **3** or has found something lost and denies it and swears falsely concerning any one of the things that someone might do to sin - **4** when it happens that he sins and he is found guilty, then he must return whatever he had stolen, or whatever he had extorted, or the thing that he had held in trust, or the lost thing that he had found, **5** or anything about which he swears falsely. He must restore it in full and add one fifth to it; he must give it to its owner when he is found guilty. **6** Then he must bring his guilt offering to the LORD, a flawless ram from the flock, convertible into silver shekels, for a guilt offering to the priest. **7** So the priest will make atonement on his behalf before the LORD and he will be forgiven for whatever he has done to become guilty.”

8 (6:1) Then the LORD spoke to Moses: **9** “Command Aaron and his sons, ‘This is the law of the burnt offering.

The burnt offering is to remain on the hearth on the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar must be kept burning on it. **10** Then the priest must put on his linen robe and must put linen leggings over his bare flesh, and he must take up the fatty ashes of the burnt offering that the fire consumed on the altar, and he must place them beside the altar. **11** Then he must take off his clothes and put on other clothes, and he must bring the fatty ashes outside the camp to a ceremonially clean place, **12** but the fire which is on the altar must be kept burning on it. It must not be extinguished. So the priest must kindle wood on it morning by morning, and he must arrange the burnt offering on it and offer the fat of the peace offering up in smoke on it. **13** A continual fire must be kept burning on the altar. It must not be extinguished.

14 “This is the law of the grain offering. The sons of Aaron are to present it before the LORD in front of the altar, **15** and

the priest must take up with his hand some of the choice wheat flour of the grain offering and some of its olive oil, and all of the frankincense that is on the grain offering, and he must offer its memorial portion up in smoke on the altar as a soothing aroma to the LORD. **16**

Aaron and his sons are to eat what is left over from it. It must be eaten unleavened in a holy place; they are to eat it in the courtyard of the Meeting Tent. **17** It must not be baked with yeast. I have given it as their portion from my gifts. It is most holy, like the sin offering and the guilt offering. **18** Every male among the sons of Aaron may eat it. It is a perpetual allotted portion throughout your generations from the gifts of the LORD. Anyone who touches these gifts must be holy.”

19 Then the LORD spoke to Moses: **20** “This is the offering of Aaron and his sons which they must present to the LORD on the day when he is anointed: a tenth of an ephah of choice wheat flour as a continual grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it in the evening. **21** It must be made with olive oil on a griddle and you must bring it well soaked, so you must present a grain offering of broken pieces as a soothing aroma to the LORD. **22** The high priest who succeeds him from among his sons must do it. It is a perpetual statute; it must be offered up in smoke as a whole offering to the LORD. **23** Every grain offering of a priest must be a whole offering; it must not be eaten.”

24 Then the LORD spoke to Moses: **25** “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is the law of the sin offering. In the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered the sin offering must be slaughtered before the LORD. It is most holy. **26**

The priest who offers it for sin is to eat it. It must be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the Meeting Tent. **27**

Anyone who touches its meat must be holy, and whoever spatters some of its blood on a garment, you must wash whatever he spatters it on in a holy place. **28** Any clay vessel it is boiled in must be broken, and if it was boiled in a

bronze vessel, then that vessel must be rubbed out and rinsed in water. **29** Any male among the priests may eat it. It is most holy. **30** But any sin offering from which some of its blood is brought into the Meeting Tent to make atonement in the sanctuary must not be eaten. It must be burned up in the fire.

1 “This is the law of the guilt offering. It is most holy.

Guzik - Leviticus 7:1-38

Leviticus 7 - More Instructions For the Priests

A. Specific instructions regarding the offerings.

1. (1-10) The guilt offering.

Likewise this *is* the law of the trespass offering (it *is* most holy): In the place where they kill the burnt offering they shall kill the trespass offering.

And its blood he shall sprinkle all around on the altar. And he shall offer from it all its fat. The fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; and the priest shall burn them on the altar *as* an offering made by fire to the LORD. It *is* a trespass offering. Every male among the priests may eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place. It *is* most holy. The trespass offering *is* like the sin offering; *there is* one law for them both: the priest who makes atonement with it shall have *it*. And the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering, that priest shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering which he has offered. Also every grain offering that is baked in the oven and all that is prepared in the covered pan, or in a pan, shall be the priest's who offers it. Every grain offering, *whether* mixed with oil, or dry, shall belong to all the sons of Aaron, to one *as much* as the other.

a. **This is the law of the trespass offering:** This offering followed a similar pattern to

previous sacrifices. The blood and the fat

belonged to God and the meat portions could be shared among the priests, with its distribution determined by the

officiating priest.

b. **Shall belong to all the sons of Aaron, to one as much as the other:** The distribution was the responsibility of the officiating priest, but they were supposed to make sure that portions were distributed equally.

2. (11-36) The peace offering.

"This *is* the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which he shall offer to the LORD: If he offers it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, or cakes of blended flour mixed with oil. Besides the cakes, *as* his offering he shall offer leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offering. And from it he shall offer one cake from each offering *as* a heave offering to the LORD. It shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering. The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day it is offered. He shall not leave any of it until morning.

But if the sacrifice of his offering *is* a vow or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offers his sacrifice; but on the next day the remainder of it also may be eaten; the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day must be burned with fire. And if *any* of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, nor shall it be imputed to him; it shall be an abomination *to* him who offers it, and the person who eats of it shall bear guilt. The flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten. It shall be burned with fire. And as for the *clean* flesh, all who are clean may eat of it. But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the LORD, while he is unclean, that person shall be cut off from his people. Moreover the person who touches any unclean thing, *such as* human uncleanness, *an* unclean animal, or any abominable unclean thing, and who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs* to the LORD, that

person shall be cut off from his people." And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'You shall not eat any fat, of ox or sheep or goat. 'And the fat of an animal that dies *naturally*, and the fat of what is torn by wild beasts, may be used in any other way; but you shall by no means eat it. For whoever eats the fat of the animal of which men offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, the person who eats *it* shall be cut off from his people. Moreover you shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, *whether* of bird or beast.

Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people.'" Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering to the LORD shall bring his offering to the LORD from the sacrifice of his peace offering.

'His own hands shall bring the offerings made by fire to the LORD. The fat with the breast he shall bring, that the breast may be waved *as* a wave offering before the LORD. And the priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'. Also the right thigh you shall give to the priest *as* a heave offering from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. He among the sons of Aaron, who offers the blood of the peace offering and the fat, shall have the right thigh for *his* part. For the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering I have taken from the children of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and I have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons from the children of Israel by a statute forever.'"

This *is* the consecrated portion for Aaron and his sons, from the offerings made by fire to the LORD, on the day when *Moses* presented them to minister to the LORD as priests. The LORD commanded this to be given to them by the children of Israel, on the day that He anointed them, *by* a statute forever throughout their generations.

a. **This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings:** A peace offering could be brought out of **thanksgiving**, out of a desire for fellowship with God, or on the occasion of the fulfillment of a **vow or a voluntary offering**.

b. **If any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering is eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted:** The meat from a peace offering had to be eaten in a fellowship meal within three days. God didn't want stale fellowship.

c. **All who are clean may eat of it:**

Ceremonial purity was required of anyone who wanted to participate in the fellowship meal associated with the peace offering. This illustrates the principle that we cannot enjoy the peace of God until we have received His cleansing grace.

d. **Whoever eats the fat of the animal of which men offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, the person who eats it shall be cut off from his people:**

This principle is again. The **fat** (speaking of the good and the abundance) and the **blood** (speaking of the life) belonged to God, and had to be given to Him.

e. **The breast may be waved as a wave**

offering to the LORD: This was a specific waving of the portion of meat or bread

dedicated to the LORD, waving it before the LORD in a specific pattern. In this way, even though the priest kept the portion, he had still dedicated it unto God.

i. The late chief Rabbi Hertz described the wave offering as thus: First, the portion was laid upon the hands of the donor. Then the officiating priest placed his own hands beneath those of the person offering the sacrifice, and moved the portion first forward and backward, then upward and

downward. These motions make a sign of a cross!

3. (37-38) Postscript on the sacrifices.

This *is* the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the consecrations, and the sacrifice of the peace offering, which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai, on the day when He commanded the children of Israel to offer their offerings to the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai.

Jesus Christ and The Sacrificial System

BUT THIS MAN, AFTER HE HAD OFFERED ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOREVER, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. (Heb. 10:12)

JESUS FULFILLED THE BURNT OFFERING (Leviticus 1) *AS CHRIST ALSO HAS LOVED US AND GIVEN HIMSELF FOR US, AN OFFERING AND A SACRIFICE TO GOD FOR A SWEET SMELLING AROMA* (Eph. 5:2)

JESUS FULFILLED THE GRAIN AND FIRSTFRUITS OFFERING (Leviticus 2) *BUT NOW CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, AND HAS BECOME THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP.* (1Co. 15:20)

JESUS FULFILLED THE PEACE OFFERING (Leviticus 3) *THEREFORE, HAVING BEEN JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST.* (Rom. 5:1)

JESUS FULFILLED THE SIN OFFERING (Leviticus 4) *FOR HE MADE HIM WHO KNEW NO SIN TO BE SIN FOR US, THAT WE MIGHT BECOME THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIM* (2Co. 5:21) JESUS FULFILLED THE GUILT OFFERING (Leviticus 5) *WHO WAS DELIVERED UP BECAUSE OF OUR OFFENSES AND WAS RAISED BECAUSE OF OUR JUSTIFICATION* (Rom. 4:25)

YOU HAVE MADE HIS SOUL AN OFFERING FOR SIN (Isa. 53:10)

JESUS FULFILLED EVERY SACRIFICE FOR US!

"He is the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, the Peace-offering, the Sin-offering, and the Trespass-offering for His people. By His one oblation of Himself once offered, He has stood in all these different relations" (Jukes) *WE HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE*

OFFERING OF THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST ONCE FOR ALL. (Heb. 10:10)

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 In the place where they slaughter the burnt offering they must slaughter the guilt offering, and the officiating priest must splash the blood against the altar's sides. **3**

Then the one making the offering must present all its fat: the fatty tail, the fat covering the entrails, **4** the two kidneys and the fat on their sinews, and the protruding lobe on the liver (which he must remove along with the kidneys). **5** Then the priest must offer them up in smoke on the altar as a gift to the LORD. It is a guilt offering. **6**

Any male among the priests may eat it. It must be eaten in a holy place. It is most holy. **7** The law is the same for the sin offering and the guilt offering; it belongs to the priest who makes atonement with it.

8 "'As for the priest who presents someone's burnt offering, the hide of that burnt offering which he presented belongs to him. **9** Every grain offering which is baked in the oven or made in the pan or on the griddle belongs to the priest who presented it. **10** Every grain offering, whether mixed with olive oil or dry, belongs to all the sons of Aaron, each one alike.

11 "'This is the law of the peace offering sacrifice which he is to present to the LORD. **12** If he presents it on account of thanksgiving, along with the thank offering sacrifice he must present unleavened loaves mixed with olive oil,

unleavened wafers smeared with olive oil, and well soaked ring-shaped loaves made of choice wheat flour mixed with olive oil. **13** He must present this grain offering in addition to ring-shaped loaves of leavened bread which regularly accompany the sacrifice of his thanksgiving peace offering.

14 He must present one of each kind of grain offering as a contribution offering to the LORD; it belongs to the priest who splashes the blood of the peace offering. **15** The meat of his thanksgiving peace offering must be eaten on the day of his offering; he must not set any of it aside until morning.

16 “If his offering is a votive or freewill sacrifice, it may be eaten on the day he presents his sacrifice, and also the leftovers from it may be eaten on the next day, **17** but the leftovers from the meat of the sacrifice must be burned up in the fire on the third day. **18** If some of the meat of his peace offering sacrifice is ever eaten on the third day it will not be accepted; it will not be accounted to the one who presented it, since it is spoiled, and the person who eats from it will bear his punishment for iniquity. **19** The meat which touches anything ceremonially unclean must not be eaten; it must be burned up in the fire. As for ceremonially clean meat, everyone who is ceremonially clean may eat the meat. **20** The person who eats meat from the peace offering sacrifice which belongs to the LORD while his uncleanness persists will be cut off from his people. **21** When a person touches anything unclean (whether human uncleanness, or an unclean animal, or an unclean detestable creature) and eats some of the meat of the peace offering sacrifice which belongs to the LORD, that person will be cut off from his people.”

22 Then the LORD spoke to Moses: **23** “Tell the Israelites, ‘You must not eat any fat of an ox, sheep, or goat. **24** Moreover, the fat of an animal that has died of natural causes and the fat of an animal torn by beasts may be used for any other purpose, but you must certainly never eat it. **25** If anyone eats fat from the animal from which he

presents a gift to the LORD, that person will be cut off from his people. **26** And you must not eat any blood of the birds or the domesticated land animals in any of the places where you live. **27** Any person who eats any blood – that person will be cut off from his people.’”

28 Then the LORD spoke to Moses: **29** “Tell the Israelites, ‘The one who presents his peace offering sacrifice to the LORD must bring his offering to the LORD

from his peace offering sacrifice. **30** With his own hands he must bring the LORD’s gifts. He must bring the fat with the breast to wave the breast as a wave offering before the LORD, **31** and the priest must offer the fat up in smoke on the altar, but the breast will belong to Aaron and his sons.

32 The right thigh you must give as a contribution offering to the priest from your peace offering sacrifices.

33 The one from Aaron’s sons who presents the blood of the peace offering and fat will have the right thigh as his share,

34 for the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution offering I have taken from the Israelites out of their peace offering sacrifices and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons from the people of Israel as a perpetual allotted portion.’”

35 This is the allotment of Aaron and the allotment of his sons from the LORD’s gifts on the day Moses presented them to serve as priests to the LORD. **36** This is what the LORD commanded to give to them from the Israelites on the day Moses anointed them – a perpetual allotted portion throughout their generations.

37 This is the law for the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the guilt offering, the ordination offering, and the peace offering sacrifice, **38** which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai on the day he commanded the Israelites to present their offerings to the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai.

1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 8:1-36

Leviticus 8 - The Consecration of Priests

A. Prelude to the consecration of Aaron and his sons.

1. (1-3) The command given.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, the anointing oil, a bull as the sin offering, two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread; and gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting."

a. **Take Aaron and his sons with him:**

Exodus 29 records the command God gave to

Moses to carry out this consecration ceremony with Aaron and his sons. Now that the

tabernacle was built it was time to perform the ceremony.

i. Exo. 29:1 stated the purpose for the

ceremony: *To hallow them for ministering to Me as priests.*

That is, it was to set the priests aside for God's purpose and will.

ii. Since in Jesus we are *a holy priesthood* . .

. . *a royal priesthood* (1Pe. 2:5, 9), there is much for us to learn by analogy in this

consecration ceremony. God wants us set

apart for His purpose and will, and He uses

these principles to accomplish that goal.

b. **Gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting:** God gave a specific lists of items needed in the consecration ceremony, and commanded that

all the congregation together witness this ceremony. It would not be performed secretly.

2. (4-5) Moses does as the LORD commands.

So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. And

the congregation was gathered together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. And Moses

said to the congregation, "This *is* what the LORD commanded to be done."

a. **This is what the LORD commanded to**

be done: The whole matter of consecration stuff was God's plan, not the plan of Moses. In some ways this was a strange and messy plan, but it was God's plan for the process of consecration.

B. Preliminary aspects of the ceremony of priestly consecration.

1. (6) The washing of the priests.

Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water.

a. **Aaron and his sons:** This was not a ceremony for just anyone in Israel. There were special consecration ceremonies available to anyone - such as the Nazirite vow in Numbers 6.

But this ceremony was for *priests*, for **Aaron and his sons**.

b. **And washed them with water:** The process of consecration began with cleansing.

All priestly ministries began with cleansing, and a cleansing that was *received*: **you shall wash them**. Aaron and his sons did not wash themselves; they *received* a washing.

i. This was humbling, because it took place publicly at *the door of the tabernacle of meeting*. We cannot be cleansed from our sin without being humbled first.

ii. "Some Jewish interpreters have maintained that the washing of Aaron and his sons was by immersion, as was required of the high priest on the day of atonement (Lev. 16:4)." (Harrison)

iii. This great cleansing was a one-time thing. From then on they just needed to cleanse their hands and their feet.

iv. Like these ancient priests, every Christian is washed by the work of God's word (Eph.

5:26), by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5). This cleansing work was accomplished by the death of Jesus for us (Rev. 1:5) and appropriated by faith.

2. (7-9) The clothing of the priests in priestly garments.

And he put the tunic on him, girded him with the sash, clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod on him; and he girded him with the intricately woven band of the ephod, and with it tied *the ephod* on him. Then he put the breastplate on him, and he put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate. And he put the turban on his head. Also on the turban, on its front, he put the golden plate, the holy crown, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

a. **And he put the tunic on him:** After being cleansed, the priest had to be clothed - but not in his own clothes. He had to put on garments given by God.

i. Like these ancient priests, every believer is clothed in Jesus Christ and in his righteousness (Rev. 3:5). These are clothes that are given freely by Jesus, but received and "worn" by faith.

ii. "Note, that *these garments were provided for the m.* They were at no expense in buying them, nor labor in weaving them, nor skill in making them; they had simply to put them on. And you, dear child of God, are to put on the garments which Jesus Christ has provided for you, at his own cost, and freely bestows upon you out of boundless love." (Spurgeon)

b. **Girded with the sash . . . the ephod . . .**

the breastplate . . . the turban: Each of these specific articles of clothing were made for the high priest, garments to show the *glory and for beauty* of the priesthood (Exo. 28:2).

3. (10-13) The anointing of the priests.

Also Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* in it, and consecrated them. He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the laver and its base, to

consecrate them. And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him. Then Moses brought Aaron's sons and put tunics on them, girded them with sashes, and put hats on them, as the LORD had commanded

Moses.

a. **Moses took the anointing oil:** The oil was **sprinkled** on non-living things, to show that they were specially set apart for the service of the LORD.

b. **And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to**

consecrate him: Priests also had to be anointed. The oil (a picture of the Holy Spirit) was *poured* over their heads, indicating that it was given in great measure, not in small measure (Psa. 133:2). *Things* were **sprinkled**, but upon *people* the oil was out-**poured**.

i. **To consecrate him:** This means that the anointing oil set Aaron apart. If something is *consecrated*, it is then set apart for God's service. Once sprinkled with oil, then the tabernacle wasn't just a tent anymore; the altar was no longer just a fire-pit; and Aaron was no longer just a man.

ii. "There is no statement in the OT as to why oil typified the Holy Spirit. Oil was widely used in lamps. As the lamp burned, the oil seemed to vanish into the air. Such a connection of oil and air possibly may have made the typology natural in the Hebrew culture." (Kaiser)

iii. Like these ancient priests, every believer has an anointing (1Jo. 2:20) that they may receive and walk in by faith.

4. (14-17) The sacrifice of the sin offering.

And he brought the bull for the sin offering. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull for the sin

offering, and Moses killed *it*.

Then he took the blood, and put *some* on the horns of the altar all around with his finger, and purified the altar. And he poured the blood at the base of the altar, and consecrated it, to make atonement for it. Then he took all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned *them* on the altar. But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal, he burned with fire outside the camp, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

a. Aaron and his sons laid their hands on

the head of the bull: The washing at the door of the tabernacle was only one aspect of the symbolic cleansing from sin. There also had to be the punishment of the guilty, and this happened in the **sin offering**. As Aaron and his sons **laid their hands on the head of the bull**, they symbolically transferred their sin to the bull.

i. "The Hebrew word means more than lightly placing the hand, it gives the idea of pressing hard upon the bullock's head. They came each one and leaned upon the victim, loading him with their burden, signifying their acceptance of its substitution, their joy that the Lord would accept that victim in their stead. When they put their hands on the bullock, they made a confession of sin." (Spurgeon)

ii. Like these ancient priests, every believer can only be consecrated to God through sacrifice. Our consecration should be greater, because it was made through a far greater sacrifice - the sacrifice of God's own Son.

b. Then he took the blood, and put some on the horns of the altar all around with

his finger, and purified the altar: The altar was sanctified with the blood of the sin offering, and the best of the animal was burnt before the LORD - the rest was destroyed outside the camp. The sin offering said, "We have failed to give our best to God. This animal now gives its best to atone for our failure, and we decide to live now giving our best, even as this animal who dies in our place."

i. The idea behind the ancient Hebrew word for **altar** is essentially, "killing-place." The ancient altar - a place of death - was made holy and was consecrated to God. Like that ancient altar, the altar of the New Covenant - the cross - is transformed from a place to death to a place set apart to bring life.

5. (18-21) The sacrifice of the burnt offering.

Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering.

And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, and Moses killed *it*. Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burned the head, the pieces, and the fat. Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water. And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It *was* a burnt sacrifice for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

a. **Aaron and his sons laid their hands on**

the head of the ram: As the sin offering before it, the **burnt offering** also symbolically received the sins of the priests and they laid their hands on the head of the animal and confessed their sin.

b. **Moses burned the whole ram on the**

altar: The ram was completely burnt before the LORD, with its blood sprinkled on the altar.

The burnt offering said, "We have failed to give our all to God. This animal now gives its all to atone for our failure, and we decide to live now giving our all, even as this animal who dies in our place."

i. This demonstration of total commitment to the LORD only came after the first three aspects of the ceremony: cleansing, anointing, and atonement. Without these three things settled first, we cannot truly give ourselves to God.

C. The ceremony of priestly consecration.

1. (22-24) The sacrifice and the blood.

And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, and Moses killed *it*. Also he took *some* of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put *some* of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar.

a. The second ram, the ram of consecration . . . Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram: Atonement for sin was performed with the sin

offering and the burnt offering. Yet in their consecration, the priests still had to identify with the sacrificial victim. Their identification with the sacrifice went beyond atonement.

b. He took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear: To express the idea of consecration, blood from the ram was placed on the ear, thumb, and toe of the priest.

It was blood from the ram - not the wool, not the fat. God wanted the *life* of the sacrificial victim to mark His consecrated priests.

i. Lev. 17:11 is one of many passages that expresses this principle: *For the life of the flesh is in the blood*. God wanted the *life* of the sacrificial victim to be evident in the *body* of the priest.

c. Tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of their right hand, and on the big toe of their right foot: These consecrated priests were stained with the blood of sacrifice. They should *hear* differently because the blood was on their **ear**. They should *work* differently because the blood was on their **thumb**. They should *walk* differently because the blood was on their **toe**.

i. Specifically, it was applied to the **right** ear, hand, and foot. This isn't because God felt they could do whatever they wanted to with their left ear, hand, and foot. It is because the **right** side was considered superior, with more strength and skill (because most people are right-handed). God wanted their *best* to be dedicated to Him.

2. (25-29) A wave offering to God.

Then he took the fat and the fat tail, all the fat that *was* on the entrails, the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh; and from the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD he took one unleavened cake, a cake of bread *anointed with* oil, and one wafer, and put *them* on the fat and on the right thigh; and he put all *these* in Aaron's hands and in his sons' hands, and waved them *as* a wave offering before the LORD. Then Moses took them from their hands and burned *them* on the altar, on the burnt offering. They *were* consecration offerings for a sweet aroma. That *was* an offering made by fire to the LORD. And Moses took the breast and waved it *as* a wave offering before the LORD. It was Moses' part of the ram of consecration, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

a. **He took the fat and the fat tail:** The second ram used in the consecration ceremony

- the ram whose blood was applied to the ear, hand, and foot of the priest - was used as a

wave offering before the LORD.

b. Waved them as a wave offering before

the LORD: Part of this second ram - the best parts - was put together with the **bread, cake**, and the **wafer** and was first *waved* before God in an act of presentation. Then these portions were burnt on the altar as an act of complete devotion.

3. (30) Blood is sprinkled on the priestly garments.

Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which *was* on the altar, and sprinkled *it* on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.

a. Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which was on the altar, and sprinkled it:

The blood alone wasn't enough. God wanted **blood** mixed with **oil**, and to have the *mixture* sprinkled on the priests. There was to be a combination of both the sacrifice and the spirit (represented by the **anointing oil**).

i. "Yes, brethren, we need to know that double anointing, the blood of Jesus which cleanses, and the oil of the Holy Spirit which perfumes us. It is well to see how these two blend in one . . . It is a terrible blunder to set the blood and the oil in opposition, they must always go together." (Spurgeon) b. **On his garments:** This mixture of oil and blood stained the garments of Aaron and his sons. It would be a long reminder of this ceremony of consecration.

4. (31-32) A fellowship meal with God.

And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, "Boil the flesh *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that *is* in the basket of consecration offerings, as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it.' What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire."

a. Boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and eat it there

with the bread: The remaining meat portions of this ram were given to Aaron and the other priests, after those portions were presented to God as a **wave offering**. It was then cooked and eaten by the priests during the days of their consecration ceremony.

i. The second ram - after the ram presented as a burnt offering - had its *life* applied to the consecrated priests. First its life was applied with the application of blood to the ear, hand, and foot of the priest. Then through a ritual meal, its life was applied by the priest taking the ram into himself.

ii. The eating did not *begin* the process of consecration. It came *after* the washing, the clothing, and the blood-atonement of the priests. The eating speaks of the *continuing relationship* of the priest with God. "Let not this distinction be forgotten; the eating of the sacrifice is not intended to give life, for no dead man can eat, but to sustain the life

which is there already. A believing look at Christ makes you live, but spiritual life must be fed and sustained." (Spurgeon)

iii. In this way, eating is a good picture of a healthy, continuing relationship with Jesus.

- Eating is *personal*. No one can eat for you, and no one can have a relationship with Jesus on your behalf.

- Eating is *inward*. It does no good to be around food or to rub food on the outside of your body - you must *take it*

in. We must take Jesus unto ourselves *inwardly*, not merely in an external way.

- Eating is *active*. Some medicines are received passively - they are injected

under the skin and go to work. Such medicines could even be received while one sleeps - but no one can eat while asleep. We must *actively* take Jesus unto ourselves.

· Eating arises *out of a sense of need* and produces *a sense of satisfaction*. We will have a healthy relationship with Jesus when we *sense our need* for Him and *receive the satisfaction* the relationship brings.

b. What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire: God did *not* want to fellowship with them over stale food. Even if they had the exact same meal, God wanted it made fresh. He wants our fellowship with Him to be *fresh*.

5. (33-36) Seven days of consecration.

"And you shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting *for* seven days, until the days of your consecration are ended. For seven days he shall consecrate you. As he has done this day, *so* the LORD has commanded to do, to make atonement for you. Therefore you shall stay *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting day and night for seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, so that you may not die; for so I have been commanded." So Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses.

a. You shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting for seven days: With the coming generations, new descendants of Aaron would qualify for the priesthood and would be consecrated the same way. For Aaron and his descendants the consecration process took **seven days**.

i. "Verse 35 indicates that on each of the next seven days Moses was to offer the

same sacrifices on behalf of Aaron and his sons." (Harrison) See also Exo. 29:35-36 to clarify this point.

b. You shall stay at the door of the tabernacle of meeting day and night for seven days:

For **seven days** they lived at the tabernacle and ate the ram of the consecration and the bread of consecration. The consecration ceremony wasn't quick and easy. It took time, reflection, and a constant awareness of sacrifice and atonement.

i. "The Lord's part was consumed with fire upon the altar, and another portion was eaten by man in the holy place. The peace offering was thus an open declaration of the communion which had been established between God and man, so that they ate together, rejoicing in the same offering." (Spurgeon)

ii. "I know some good people who are very busy indeed in the services of God, and I am very delighted that they should be, but I would caution them against working and never eating. They give up attending the means of grace as hearers, because they have so much to do as workers." (Spurgeon)

c. You shall abide at the door of the tabernacle . . . and keep the charge of the LORD. After seven days of living in the tabernacle, they would either love the tabernacle of God and His presence, or they would hate them.

i. If approached with the right heart, their consecration demonstrate the heart of the Psalmist: *How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.* (Psa. 84:1-2)

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 “Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, the anointing oil, the sin offering bull, the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread, **3** and assemble the whole congregation at the entrance of the Meeting Tent.” **4** So Moses did just as the LORD commanded him, and the congregation assembled at the entrance of the Meeting Tent. **5** Then Moses said to the congregation: “This is what the LORD has commanded to be done.”

6 So Moses brought Aaron and his sons forward and washed them with water. **7** Then he put the tunic on Aaron, wrapped the sash around him, and clothed him with the robe. Next he put the ephod on him and placed on him the decorated band of the ephod, and fastened the ephod closely to him with the band. **8** He then set the breastpiece on him and put the Urim and Thummim into the breastpiece. **9** Finally, he set the turban on his head and attached the gold plate, the holy diadem, to the front of the turban just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

10 Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and everything in it, and so consecrated them.

11 Next he sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times and so anointed the altar, all its vessels, and the wash basin and its stand to consecrate them. **12** He then poured some of the anointing oil on the head of Aaron and anointed him to consecrate him. **13** Moses also brought forward Aaron’s sons, clothed them with tunics, wrapped sashes around them, and wrapped headbands on them just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

14 Then he brought near the sin offering bull and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the sin offering bull, **15** and he slaughtered it. Moses then took the blood and put it all around on the horns of the altar with his finger and decontaminated the altar, and he poured out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar and so consecrated it to make

atonement on it. **16** Then he took all the fat on the entrails, the protruding lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat, and Moses offered it all up in smoke on the altar, **17** but the rest of the bull – its hide, its flesh, and its dung – he completely burned up outside the camp just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

18 Then he presented the burnt offering ram and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, **19** and he slaughtered it. Moses then splashed the blood against the altar's sides. **20** Then he cut the ram into parts, and Moses offered the head, the parts, and the suet up in smoke, **21** but the entrails and the legs he washed with water, and Moses offered the whole ram up in smoke on the altar – it was a burnt offering for a soothing aroma, a gift to the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

22 Then he presented the second ram, the ram of ordination, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram **23** and he slaughtered it. Moses then took some of its blood and put it on Aaron's right earlobe, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. **24** Next he brought Aaron's sons forward, and Moses put some of the blood on their right earlobes, on their right thumbs, and on the big toes of their right feet, and Moses splashed the rest of the blood against the altar's sides.

25 Then he took the fat (the fatty tail, all the fat on the entrails, the protruding lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat) and the right thigh, **26** and from the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD he took one unleavened loaf, one loaf of bread mixed with olive oil, and one wafer, and placed them on the fat parts and on the right thigh. **27** He then put all of them on the palms of Aaron and his sons, who waved them as a wave offering before the LORD. **28** Moses then took them from their palms and offered them up in smoke on the altar on top of the burnt offering – they were an ordination offering for a soothing aroma; it was a gift to the LORD. **29** Finally, Moses took the

breast and waved it as a wave offering before the LORD from the ram of ordination. It was Moses' share just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

30 Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which was on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments with him. So he consecrated Aaron, his garments, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.

31 Then Moses said to Aaron and his sons, "Boil the meat at the entrance of the Meeting Tent, and there you are to eat it and the bread which is in the ordination offering basket, just as I have commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons are to eat it,' **32** but the remainder of the meat and the bread you must burn with fire. **33** And you must not go out from the entrance of the Meeting Tent for seven days, until the day when your days of ordination are completed, because you must be ordained over a seven-day period. **34** What has been done on this day the LORD has commanded to be done to make atonement for you.

35 You must reside at the entrance of the Meeting Tent day and night for seven days and keep the charge of the LORD so that you will not die, for this is what I have been commanded." **36** So Aaron and his sons did all the things the LORD had commanded through Moses.

1 On the eighth day Moses summoned Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel,

Guzik - Leviticus 9:1-24

Leviticus 9 - More on the Consecration of Priests

A. Introduction: God calls Aaron to minister.

1. (1) Moses calls to Aaron and his sons.

It came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel.

a. **It came to pass on the eighth day:** The whole ceremony of consecration lasted more than a week. It was not a quick and easy

process. The call to the priesthood came **on the eighth day**, the day of new beginnings. After seven days of patient fellowship with the LORD

in His tabernacle, God was ready to do a new work in and through the priests.

2. (2) Offerings for Aaron.

And he said to Aaron, "Take for yourself a young bull as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt

offering, without blemish, and offer *them* before the LORD."

a. **Take for yourself a young bull as a sin offering:** As part of the consecration ceremony, Aaron and his sons lived for an entire week at the tabernacle of meeting. Yet they still had sin to atone for during that week. The consecration ceremony did not make Aaron and his sons perfect. During the seven days of just sitting in the tabernacle he added more sin to his account that had to be cleared.

i. Through the repetition of sacrifice, God also wanted to show that as useful as the animal sacrifices were, they were not complete and could not make an end of sins. Only the perfect sacrifice of the Messiah could do that.

b. **And a ram as a burnt offering:** Even though Aaron just spent the prior week in special dedication to the LORD, there was still more to give. Though this was an important experience of dedication, the idea of consecration had to be *ongoing* in the life of Aaron and all of God's priests.

B. Aaron begins the priestly ministry.

1. (3-6) In a context of atonement and obedience, God will show His glory.

"And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying, 'Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, *both* of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering, also a bull and a ram as peace offerings, to sacrifice before the

LORD, and a grain offering mixed with oil; for today the LORD will appear to you.'" So they brought what Moses commanded before the tabernacle of meeting. And all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD. Then Moses said, "This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded you to do, and the glory of the LORD will appear to you."

a. This is the thing which the LORD commanded you to do, and the glory of the LORD will appear to you: Everything Aaron did in the last week prepared him for this moment. This was the end goal of the week of separation and consecration to the LORD - the display of His glory.

2. (7) Aaron will begin to minister **for the people**.

And Moses said to Aaron, "Go to the altar, offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people.

Offer the offering of the people, and make atonement for them, as the LORD commanded."

a. Offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people: Aaron had to first deal with his own sin, and then he could truly function as a *priest*, ready to serve others.

b. Make atonement for them, as the LORD commanded: Aaron's priesthood existed for the glory of God and for the benefit of the people - not for his own personal benefit. The office of high priest was one of great authority, but of even great responsibility.

3. (8-14) Aaron offers sacrifice for his own sin, along with a burnt offering.

Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which *was* for himself.

Then the sons of Aaron brought the blood to him.

And he dipped his finger in the blood, put *it* on the horns of the altar, and poured the blood at the base of the altar. But the fat, the kidneys, and the fatty lobe from the liver of the sin offering he burned on the altar, as the LORD had commanded Moses. The flesh and the hide he burned with fire outside the camp. And he killed the burnt offering; and Aaron's sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar. Then they presented the burnt offering to him, with its pieces and head, and he burned *them* on the altar. And he washed the entrails and the legs, and burned *them* with the burnt offering on the altar.

a. Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself: This was a display of honesty and humility before the people. Aaron, before offering a sacrifice of atonement for the people, publicly offered one for himself, identifying himself with the people. This sacrifice told the nation, "I am a sinner who needs atonement also."

4. (15-21) Aaron offers the sacrifice on behalf of the people. Then he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which *was* the sin offering for the people, and killed it and offered it for sin, like the first one. And he brought the burnt offering and offered it according to the prescribed manner.

Then he brought the grain offering, took a handful of it, and burned *it* on the altar, besides the burnt sacrifice of the morning. He also killed the bull and the ram *as* sacrifices of peace offerings, which *were* for the people. And Aaron's sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar, and the fat from the bull and the ram; the fatty tail, what covers *the entrails* and the kidneys, and the fatty lobe *attached to* the liver; and they put the fat on the breasts. Then he burned the fat on the altar; but the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved *as* a wave offering before the LORD, as Moses had commanded.

5. (22-24) God blesses Israel with a display of His glory.

Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the

tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, and fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces.

a. Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the

people, blessed them: Aaron's heart was turned towards the people. He longed to bless them, and so he **lifted his hand toward the people** [and] **blessed them**. His washing, sanctification, justification, consecration, waiting with and for the LORD, his identification with the people, and humility each made him desire a blessing for the people - more than for himself.

b. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, and fire came out from

before the LORD: God proved His presence by sending the fire. The priests were there, the offering was there, the Tabernacle was there, and the nation was there, but it was all incomplete the **fire** from God.

i. The Bible gives us seven examples of where God showed acceptance of a sacrifice with fire from heaven:

- Abel (Gen. 4:4)
- Aaron (Lev. 9:24)
- Gideon (Jdg. 6:21)
- Manoah (Jdg. 13:19-23)
- David (1Ch. 21:28)
- Solomon (2Ch. 7:1)
- Elijah (1Ki. 18:38).

ii. Fire was often associated with God's presence and work. Deu. 4:24 tells us, *the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a*

jealous God. John the Baptist promised Jesus would come with a baptism with the Holy Spirit and with *fire* (Mat. 3:11). The Holy Spirit manifested His presence on the day of Pentecost by tongues of fire (Act. 2:3). Jesus said: *I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!* (Luk. 12:49)

iii. Though this consecration ceremony has a spiritual application to us, we obviously were not literally consecrated to the priesthood through this ceremony. Yet our priesthood is real and after the pattern of the priesthood of Jesus, who never went through such a ceremony. The priesthood of Jesus was based on an *oath*, as in Heb. 7:21-22: *For they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: The Lord has sworn and will not relent, You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek*. We are also made priests not by a ceremony, but by the oath - the promise of God - just like Jesus.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 and said to Aaron, "Take for yourself a bull calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, both flawless, and present them before the LORD. **3** Then tell the Israelites: 'Take a male goat for a sin offering and a calf and lamb, both a year old and flawless, for a burnt offering, **4** and an ox and a ram for peace offerings to sacrifice before the LORD, and a grain offering mixed with olive oil, for today the LORD is going to appear to you.'" **5**

So they took what Moses had commanded to the front of the Meeting Tent and the whole congregation presented them and stood before the LORD. **6** Then Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded you to do so that the glory of the LORD may appear to you." **7** Moses then said to Aaron, "Approach the altar and make your sin offering and your

burnt offering, and make atonement on behalf of yourself and on behalf of the people; and also make the people's offering and make atonement on behalf of them just as the LORD has commanded."

8 So Aaron approached the altar and slaughtered the sin offering calf which was for himself. **9** Then Aaron's sons presented the blood to him and he dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar, and the rest of the blood he poured out at the base of the altar. **10** The fat and the kidneys and the protruding lobe of the liver from the sin offering he offered up in smoke on the altar just as the LORD had commanded Moses, **11** but the flesh and the hide he completely burned up outside the camp.

12 He then slaughtered the burnt offering, and his sons handed the blood to him and he splashed it against the altar's sides. **13** The burnt offering itself they handed to him by its parts, including the head, and he offered them up in smoke on the altar, **14** and he washed the entrails and the legs and offered them up in smoke on top of the burnt offering on the altar.

15 Then he presented the people's offering. He took the sin offering male goat which was for the people, slaughtered it, and performed a decontamination rite with it like the first one. **16** He then presented the burnt offering, and did it according to the standard regulation.

17 Next he presented the grain offering, filled his hand with some of it, and offered it up in smoke on the altar in addition to the morning burnt offering. **18** Then he slaughtered the ox and the ram – the peace offering sacrifices which were for the people – and Aaron's sons handed the blood to him and he splashed it against the altar's sides. **19** As for the fat parts from the ox and from the ram (the fatty tail, the fat covering the entrails, the kidneys, and the protruding lobe of the liver), **20** they set those on the breasts and he offered the fat parts up in smoke on the altar. **21** Finally Aaron

waved the breasts and the right thigh as a wave offering before the LORD

just as Moses had commanded.

22 Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them and descended from making the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering. **23**

Moses and Aaron then entered into the Meeting Tent.

When they came out, they blessed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. **24** Then fire went out from the presence of the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat parts on the altar, and all the people saw it, so they shouted loudly and fell down with their faces to the ground.

1 Then Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, each took his fire pan and put fire in it, set incense on it, and presented strange fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them to do.

Guzik - Leviticus 10:1-20

Leviticus 10 - The Conduct of Priests

A. Nadab and Abihu.

1. (1) The sin of Aaron's sons.

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them.

a. **Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it:** In the afterglow of the consecration experience (which Nadab and Abihu were part of), these two sons of Aaron sought out their own relationship with God, apart from the revelation granted through Moses.

i. We don't know what their motivation was.

Perhaps it was

pride, perhaps it was *ambition*, perhaps it was *jealousy*, perhaps it was *impatience* that motivated them. Whatever

their exact motivation, it wasn't holiness unto the LORD.

ii. Nadab and Abihu had a legacy of great spiritual experiences. They saw first-hand:

- All the miracles God did in bringing the nation out of Egypt.

- The voice of God and saw the fire, lightning, smoke, and felt the thunder and the earthquake with the rest of the nation at Mount Sinai.

- They went up with Moses, Aaron, and the seventy elders for a special meeting with God on Mount Sinai (Exo. 24:1-2), where they *saw the God of Israel . . . so they say God, and they ate and drank* (Exo. 24:9-11).

iii. This shows that even a legacy of great spiritual experiences can't keep us right with God - only an abiding relationship grounded in the truth of God's word can.

b. Which He had not commanded them:

They came in an unauthorized way, coming to God, but demanding to come their own way.

Therefore God considered this a **profane fire before the LORD**.

i. This was a misuse of special incense. This incense was regarded as *holy for the LORD*

(Exo. 30:35-37). It wasn't to be used in someone's experiment with God.

ii. **Profane fire** was a fire not kindled from the altar of burnt offering; it was fire not associated with the atoning and redeeming work of sacrifice.

iii. The fire in the altar of burnt offering was sacred because it was kindled by God

Himself. Nadab and Abihu offered a fire of their own making. Perhaps they thought that

all fire was the same, and the undiscerning may have agreed with them. But all fire isn't the same and there is a huge difference between the fire kindled by God and fire conjured up by man.

iv. We also should not forget that Satan himself can deceive with fire. In the great tribulation the Antichrist and his lieutenant will be able to make *fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men* (Rev. 13:13). They will use this fire to deceive the undiscerning.

v. Worst of all, **before the LORD** probably means they dared even to go past the veil into the Most Holy Place. Perhaps they thought they had accomplished too much during their time of consecration, and were now worthy to go right in.

2. (2) The judgment of God upon Nadab and Abihu. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

a. **So fire went out from the LORD:** The same fire that showed forth God's glory in Lev. 9:24 now showed His judgment at these unfaithful priests.

b. **And devoured them:** The fire of Lev. 9:24 was a fire of glory and this was a fire of judgment. Yet in many ways it was the *same fire*.

i. Fire is a figure of searching judgment and purification. Our works for Jesus will be judged by fire (1Co. 3:13-15), and Jesus is described as having *eyes like a flame of fire* (Rev. 1:14). He has eyes of searching judgment and discernment.

ii. Many of those who cry out to God, "send your fire among us" think only of a Lev. 9:24

fire, without considering the same fire is present to purify and cleanse in Lev. 10:2. Truth be known, many of us desperately beg God *not* to send his fire, so the purity of His judgments will not be known among us. God reads our hearts and not only our pious prayers to send revival fire.

c. **They died before the LORD:** They may well have been struck down in the Most Holy Place itself.

3. (3) God's warning to Moses and Aaron.

And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.' " So Aaron held his peace.

a. **So Aaron held his peace:** Aaron just saw two of his sons struck down before the LORD. It was natural for him to question or even to lament - but God would not allow it. More

important than Aaron's right to grieve was the respect of God's holiness.

b. **By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy:** Many think they can come their own way before God and do their own thing in His presence. But God demands to be **regarded as holy** by all those who come near to Him.

i. Make no mistake: We can come to God just as we are, but we may not come to Him our own way. We must come the way He has provided, the way made in Jesus Christ.

c. **And before all the people I must be glorified:** This reminds us that *God* must be glorified in the meetings of His people. The focus must not be on man, on his cleverness, on his insight, or on his ingenuity. Those who fail to glorify God will not be rewarded.

B. Aftermath of God's judgment on Nadab and Abihu.

1. (4-5) The bodies are removed.

And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them,

"Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp." So they went near and carried them by their tunics out of the camp, as Moses had said.

a. Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp:

Moses would not send a consecrated priest (Aaron or one of his sons) to carry these dead bodies outside the Tabernacle courts to burial.

The work of burial had to be done instead by these relatives.

2. (6-7) Mourning is prohibited.

And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and

Ithamar, his sons, "Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people. But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD has kindled. You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die, for the anointing oil of the LORD *is* upon you." And they did according to the word of Moses."

a. Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people: This perhaps was the hardest day of Aaron's life. Two of his sons were dead before him, and he could not mourn

them. To mourn might have implied - even in the slightest way - that God was wrong in bringing this fire upon Nadab and Abihu, and Aaron or Moses could not communicate this.

b. You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die: Aaron must also have thought, "I did worse than this at the golden calf incident; why did God take them?" But Aaron did that *before* his consecration as a priest. After his consecration, he and

his sons had a greater accountability (**for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you**).

3. (8-11) The prohibition of drunkenness.

Then the LORD spoke to Aaron, saying: "Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. *It shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations, that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them by the hand of Moses."

a. **Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you**

die: This commandment to the priests of Israel came right after the judgment of Nadab and Abihu. This causes us to believe they may have been drunk when they were so foolish as to offer their profane fire before the LORD.

b. **That you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and**

clean: God did not want the hearts and minds of his servants clouded with alcohol when they came to serve Him. Since alcohol is a depressant, it takes away the ability to completely give one's self to God.

4. (12-15) The priest's portions defined.

And Moses spoke to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons who were left: "Take the grain offering that remains of the offerings made by fire to the LORD, and eat it without leaven beside the altar; for it *is* most holy. You shall eat it in a holy place, because it *is* your due and your sons' due, of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD; for so I have been commanded. The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place, you, your sons, and your daughters with you; for *they are*

your due and your sons' due, *which* are given from the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel. The thigh of the heave offering and the breast of the wave offering they shall bring with the offerings of fat made by fire, to offer *as* a wave offering before the LORD. And it shall be yours and your sons' with you, by a statute forever, as the LORD has commanded."

a. **Take the grain offering that remains of the offerings made by fire to the LORD, and eat it without leaven beside the altar:** What was left over from a grain offering

belonged to the priests, but they could not take it home to eat it. It had to be eaten **beside the altar**.

b. **The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place:** These portions of a sacrifice belonged to a priest *and to his household*. They could be eaten in any clean place.

5. (16-20) Confusion in the priesthood.

Then Moses made careful inquiry about the goat of the sin offering, and there it was; burned up.

And he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron *who were* left, saying, "Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place, since it *is* most holy, and *God* has given it to you to bear the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD? See! Its blood was not brought inside the holy *place*; indeed you should have eaten it in a holy *place*, as I commanded." And Aaron said to Moses, "Look, this day they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, and such things have befallen me! *If* I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?" So when Moses heard *that*, he was content.

a. **Moses made careful inquiry about the goat of the sin offering, and there it was; burned up:** Moses wanted to know why Eleazar and Ithamar didn't eat

the portions of sacrifice that were given for the priests to eat.

Since Aaron replied on their behalf in Lev.

10:19, it seems they did not eat it because they followed their father's example.

i. We often find it easy to burn the sin offering, and hard to eat it. Burning hard against sin in a judging manner is easy. To sit down with a brother or sister as a fellow sinner and partake of the sin offering with them means you realize you aren't any better than them. Only this kind of heart can minister to people.

ii. Jesus had this kind of heart, even though He had no sin! He still identified with His people in his humble birth, simple life, baptism, and death. Moses said the sin offering was given **to bear the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD**. That's why he was upset when Aaron didn't eat it. But Jesus did "eat" the sin offering when He stood as a sinner in our place and received the judgment we deserved.

b. **And such things have befallen me!** Aaron did not eat of the sin offering because he mourned the loss of his sons. Though Aaron was not allowed to do any of the other signs of mourning, it was appropriate that he fast on the day of his sons' death - and so he did, and Moses was satisfied with this explanation (**he was content**).

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 So fire went out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them so that they died before the LORD. **3**

Moses then said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke:

‘Among the ones close to me I will show myself holy, and in the presence of all the people I will be honored.’” So Aaron kept silent. **4** Moses then called to Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel, Aaron’s uncle, and said to them, “Come near, carry your brothers away from the front of the sanctuary to a place outside the camp.” **5** So they came near and carried them away in their tunics to a place outside the camp just as Moses had spoken. **6** Then Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar his other two sons, “Do not dishevel the hair of your heads and do not tear your garments, so that you do not die and so that wrath does not come on the whole congregation. Your brothers, all the house of Israel, are to mourn the burning which the LORD has caused, **7** but you must not go out from the entrance of the Meeting Tent lest you die, for the Lord’s anointing oil is on you.” So they acted according to the word of Moses.

8 Then the LORD spoke to Aaron, **9** “Do not drink wine or strong drink, you and your sons with you, when you enter into the Meeting Tent, so that you do not die, which is a perpetual statute throughout your generations, **10** as well as to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, **11** and to teach the Israelites all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them through Moses.”

12 Then Moses spoke to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his remaining sons, “Take the grain offering which remains from the gifts of the LORD and eat it unleavened beside the altar, for it is most holy. **13** You must eat it in a holy place because it is your allotted portion and the allotted portion of your sons from the gifts of the LORD, for this is what I have been commanded. **14**

Also, the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution offering you must eat in a ceremonially clean place, you and your sons and daughters with you, for they have been given as your allotted portion and the allotted portion of your sons from the peace offering sacrifices of the

Israelites. **15** The thigh of the contribution offering and the breast of the wave offering they must bring in addition to the gifts of the fat parts to wave them as a wave offering before the LORD, and it will belong to you and your sons with you for a perpetual statute just as the LORD has commanded.”

16 Later Moses sought diligently for the sin offering male goat, but it had actually been burnt. So he became angry at Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s remaining sons, saying, **17**

“Why did you not eat the sin offering in the sanctuary? For it is most holy and he gave it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement on their behalf before the LORD. **18** See here! Its blood was not brought into the holy place within! You should certainly have eaten it in the sanctuary just as I commanded!” **19** But Aaron spoke to Moses, “See here! Just today they presented their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD and such things as these have happened to me! If I had eaten a sin offering today would the LORD have been pleased?”

20 When Moses heard this explanation, he was satisfied.

1 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them, Guzik - Leviticus 11:1-47

Leviticus 11 - Clean and Unclean Animals

A. Laws regarding eating animals of land, sea, and air.

1. (1-8) Eating mammals.

Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them, “Speak to the children of Israel, saying,

‘These *are* the animals which you may eat among all the animals that *are* on the earth: Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves *and* chewing the cud; that you may eat.

Nevertheless these you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have cloven

hooves: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, is unclean to you; the rock hyrax, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves,

is unclean to you; the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have cloven hooves, *is* unclean to you; and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, *is* unclean to you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch. They *are* unclean to you."

a. Among the animals, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves and chewing the cud; that you may eat:

The rule was simple. If an animal had a divided hoof (not a single hoof as a horse has), and chewed its cud, it could be eaten.

b. These you shall not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have

cloven hooves: For example, the camel, the rock hyrax, and the hare all chew the cud, but do not have divided hooves - instead, they have paws - they are considered unkosher.

c. And the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, is unclean to you:

Additionally, the swine has a divided hoof, but it does not chew the cud - so it is considered unkosher.

i. "It is now known that the pig is the intermediate host for several parasitic organisms, some of which can result in tapeworm infestation. One of these worms, the *Taenia solium*, grows to about 2.5 m in length, and is found in poorly cooked pork." (Harrison)

d. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch: If an animal was considered unclean, one obviously could not eat it. Yet additionally, one could not touch an unclean animal, whether living or dead.

i. God was not making up new rules for Israel. Noah knew about clean and unclean

animals (Gen. 7:2, 8:20). God simply codified what was already in the traditions of Israel.

2. (9-12) Water animals.

"These you may eat of all that *are* in the water: whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers; that you may eat. But all in the seas or in the rivers that do not have fins and scales, all that move in the water or any living thing which *is* in the water, they *are* an abomination to you. They shall be an abomination to you; you shall not eat their flesh, but you shall regard their carcasses as an abomination. Whatever in the water does not have fins or scales; that *shall be* an abomination to you."

a. **These you may eat of all that are in the water:** The rule again was simple: Any water creature having both fins and scales was kosher and could be eaten.

b. **Whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers; that you may eat:** On this principle, most fishes were considered clean - except a fish like the catfish, which has no scales.

Shellfish would be unclean, because clams, crabs, oysters, and lobster all do not have fins and scales.

3. (13-19) Birds.

"And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they *are* an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, the kite, and the falcon after its kind; every raven after its kind, the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind; the little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl; the white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture; the stork, the heron after its kind, the hoopoe, and the bat."

a. **These you shall regard as an abomination among the birds:** There is no rule given to determine if a bird is clean or unclean; only specific birds (twenty in all) are mentioned as being unclean.

b. **The eagle, the vulture, the buzzard . . .** : The common thread through most of these birds is that they are either predators or scavengers; these were considered unclean.

4. (20-23) Insects.

"All flying insects that creep on *all* fours *shall be* an abomination to you. Yet these you may eat of every flying insect that creeps on *all* fours: those which have jointed legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth. These you may eat: the locust after its kind, the destroying locust after its kind, the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind. But all *other* flying insects which have four feet *shall be* an abomination to you."

a. **All flying insects that creep on all fours shall be an abomination to you:** Among insects, any creeping insect was unkosher (such as ants or grubs). Yet if there were a flying insect with legs jointed above their feet, these could be eaten. Good examples of kosher insects include the locust, the cricket, and the grasshopper.

b. **On all fours:** Some people think that means Moses was uninformed and thought that Moses had. "This phrase can hardly describe insects as having four legs, since the *Insectae* as a class normally have six legs. The reference is evidently to their movements, which resemble

the creeping or running of the four-footed animal." (Harrison)

B. More on clean and unclean animals.

1. (24-28) Disposal of the carcasses of unclean animals.

"By these you shall become unclean; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until evening; whoever carries part of the carcass of any of them shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening: *The carcass* of any animal which divides the foot, but is not cloven-hoofed or does not chew the cud, *is* unclean to you. Everyone who touches it shall be unclean.

And whatever goes on its paws, among all kinds of animals that go on *all* fours, those *are* unclean to you. Whoever touches any such carcass shall be unclean until evening. Whoever carries *any such* carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. It *is* unclean to you."

a. Whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until evening:

Unclean animals, when dead, couldn't just be left in the community to rot; they had to be disposed of. But the people who disposed of the unclean animals had to remedy their uncleanness by washing and a brief (**until evening**) quarantine.

i. This means that if a dead rat was found in an Israelite village, it would be carefully and promptly disposed of, and the one disposing of it would wash afterward. This would help

prevent disease in a significant way; after all, the Black Death - bubonic plague - killed one quarter of Europe's population around 1350, but Jewish communities were largely spared because they followed these hygienic regulations. Sadly, because they were often largely preserved, they were often accused and punished for being "masterminds" behind the plague.

b. Whoever carries any such carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening:

This shows that ceremonial uncleanness was not the same as being in a state of sin. No sacrifice was required to remedy the condition of ceremonial uncleanness. It was a state of ceremonial impurity that needed to be addressed.

2. (29-30) More unclean animals: Reptiles and other creeping things.

"These also *shall be* unclean to you among the creeping things that creep on the earth: the mole, the mouse, and the large lizard after its kind; the gecko, the monitor lizard, the sand reptile, the sand lizard, and the chameleon."

3. (31-38) The transmission of uncleanness from unclean animals.

"These *are* unclean to you among all that creep.

Whoever touches them when they are dead shall be unclean until evening. Anything on which *any* of them falls, when they are dead shall be unclean, whether *it is* any item of wood or clothing or skin or sack, whatever item *it is*, in which *any* work is done, it must be put in water.

And it shall be unclean until evening; then it shall be clean. Any earthen vessel into which *any* of them falls you shall break; and whatever *is* in it shall be unclean: in such a vessel, any edible food upon which water falls becomes unclean, and any drink that may be drunk from it becomes unclean. And everything on which *a part of any such* carcass falls shall be unclean; *whether it is* an oven or cooking stove, it shall be broken down; *for they are* unclean, and shall be unclean to you. Nevertheless a spring or a cistern, *in which there is* plenty of water, shall be clean, but whatever touches any such carcass becomes unclean. And if a part of *any such* carcass falls on any planting seed which is to be sown, it *remains* clean. But if water is put on the seed, and if *a part of any such* carcass falls on it, it *becomes* unclean to you."

a. **These are unclean to you among all that creep:**

From a hygienic standpoint, these laws were very important. They required, for example, that if a rodent crawled inside a bowl, the bowl had to be broken. Therefore any disease the rodent carried (such as bubonic plague) could not be passed on to the one who would use the bowl.

b. **Everything on which a part of any such**

carcass falls shall be unclean: These laws also promoted a general state of cleanliness inside the Hebrew home. This certainly promoted the health and the welfare of the family.

4. (39-40) Carcasses of clean animals.

"And if any animal which you may eat dies, he who touches its carcass shall be unclean until evening. He who eats of its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. He also who carries its carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening."

a. **If any animal which you may eat dies:** Seemingly, these laws apply to the natural death of clean animals, not to their butchering for food or death for sacrifice. Those handling such carcasses were ceremonially unclean and needed to be cleansed by washing and a brief quarantine.

5. (41-43) Creeping animals considered unclean.

"And every creeping thing that creeps on the earth *shall be* an abomination. It shall not be eaten. Whatever crawls on its belly, whatever goes on *all* fours, or whatever has many feet among all creeping things that creep on the earth; these you shall not eat, for they *are* an abomination. You shall not make yourselves

abominable with any creeping thing that creeps; nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them."

6. (44-47) The purpose for God's dietary laws.

"For I *am* the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I *am* holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. For I *am* the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy. This *is* the law of the animals and the birds and every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every

creature that creeps on the earth, to distinguish between the unclean and the clean, and between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten."

a. **For I am the LORD your God:** God claims the right to speak to every area of our life, including what we eat. He had the right to tell Israel what to eat and what not to eat.

b. **You shall therefore sanctify yourselves:** One great purpose of the dietary laws of Israel was to sanctify - to set them apart - from other nations. It made fellowship with those who did not serve God far more difficult.

i. We see this sanctifying effect in Daniel 1, where Daniel and his friends refuse to eat the unkosher food at the king of Babylon's table - and God blesses them for being set apart for His righteousness.

c. **Neither shall you defile yourselves:** Not only did unclean animals defile one spiritually, but there was also a hygienic defilement, and Israel was spared many diseases and plagues because of their kosher diet.

i. Among the animals, most considered unclean fell into one of three categories:

Predators (unclean because they ate both the flesh and the blood of animals),

scavengers (unclean because they were carriers of disease, and they regularly

contacted dead bodies), or *potentially*

poisonous or dangerous foods such as

shellfish and the like. Eliminating these from the diet of Israel no doubt had a healthy effect!

ii. "In general it can be said that the laws protected Israel from bad diet, dangerous vermin, and communicable diseases." (Harris)

d. **For I am the LORD who brings you up**

out of Egypt: This was the second claim God had upon Israel. The first claim was connected to His role as *Creator*. This claim is connected to His role as *redeemer*. We are obligated to God on both claims.

i. Some Christians believe we are under obligation to observe a kosher diet today. Yet this issue was settled once and for all at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15; where it was determined that obedience to Mosaic rituals was not required of the followers of Jesus.

ii. Paul pointed out that we have the full liberty to eat whatever we want to: *Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrine of demons . . . commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with*

thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. (1Ti. 4:1, 3-5)

iii. Some are under subjugation to food, or to certain foods, and that is sin under the

principle of 1Co. 6:12: *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.* Certainly, many would benefit from the attitude of self-denial and bodily discipline Paul spoke of in 1Co. 9:24-27.

iv. Yet, apart from these considerations, Christians are free to eat or not eat whatever they please - and no one should think themselves more right with God because they eat or don't eat certain things

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 “Tell the Israelites: ‘This is the kind of creature you may eat from among all the animals that are on the land.

3 You may eat any among the animals that has a divided hoof (the hooves are completely split in two) and that also chews the cud. **4** However, you must not eat these from among those that chew the cud and have divided hooves: The camel is unclean to you because it chews the cud even though its hoof is not divided. **5** The rock badger is unclean to you because it chews the cud even though its hoof is not divided. **6** The hare is unclean to you because it chews the cud even though its hoof is not divided. **7** The pig is unclean to you because its hoof is divided (the hoof is completely split in two), even though it does not chew the cud. **8** You must not eat from their meat and you must not touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.

9 ““These you can eat from all creatures that are in the water: Any creatures in the water that have both fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the streams, you may eat. **10** But any creatures that do not have both fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the streams, from all the swarming things of the water and from all the living creatures that are in the water, are detestable to you. **11**

Since they are detestable to you, you must not eat their meat and their carcass you must detest. **12** Any creature in the water that does not have both fins and scales is detestable to you.

13 ““These you are to detest from among the birds – they must not be eaten, because they are detestable: the griffon vulture, the bearded vulture, the black vulture, **14** the kite, the buzzard of any kind, **15** every kind of crow, **16** the eagle owl, the short-eared owl, the long-eared owl, the hawk of any kind, **17** the little owl, the cormorant, the screech owl, **18** the white owl, the scops owl, the osprey, **19** the stork, the heron of any kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.

20 ““Every winged swarming thing that walks on all fours is detestable to you. **21** However, this you may eat from all the

winged swarming things that walk on all fours, which have jointed legs to hop with on the land. **22** These you may eat from them: the locust of any kind, the bald locust of any kind, the cricket of any kind, the grasshopper of any kind. **23** But any other winged swarming thing that has four legs is detestable to you.

24 “By these you defile yourselves; anyone who touches their carcass will be unclean until the evening, **25** and anyone who carries their carcass must wash his clothes and will be unclean until the evening.

26 “All animals that divide the hoof but it is not completely split in two and do not chew the cud are unclean to you; anyone who touches them becomes unclean. **27** All that walk on their paws among all the creatures that walk on all fours are unclean to you.

Anyone who touches their carcass will be unclean until the evening, **28** and the one who carries their carcass must wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening; they are unclean to you.

29 “Now this is what is unclean to you among the swarming things that swarm on the land: the rat, the mouse, the large lizard of any kind, **30** the Mediterranean gecko, the spotted lizard, the wall gecko, the skink, and the chameleon. **31** These are the ones that are unclean to you among all the swarming things. Anyone who touches them when they die will be unclean until evening. **32** Also, anything they fall on when they die will become unclean – any wood vessel or garment or article of leather or sackcloth. Any such vessel with which work is done must be immersed in water and will be unclean until the evening. Then it will become clean. **33** As for any clay vessel they fall into, everything in it will become unclean and you must break it. **34** Any food that may be eaten which becomes soaked with water will become unclean.

Anything drinkable in any such vessel will become unclean.

35 Anything their carcass may fall on will become unclean.

An oven or small stove must be smashed to pieces; they are unclean, and they will stay unclean to you. **36**

However, a spring or a cistern which collects water will be clean, but one who touches their carcass will be unclean.

37 Now, if such a carcass falls on any sowing seed which is to be sown, it is clean, **38** but if water is put on the seed and such a carcass falls on it, it is unclean to you.

39 “Now if an animal that you may eat dies, whoever touches its carcass will be unclean until the evening. **40**

One who eats from its carcass must wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening, and whoever carries its carcass must wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. **41**

Every swarming thing that swarms on the land is detestable; it must not be eaten. **42** You must not eat anything that

crawls on its belly or anything that walks on all fours or on any number of legs of all the swarming things that swarm on the land, because they are detestable. **43** Do not make yourselves detestable by any of the swarming things. You must not defile yourselves by them and become unclean by them, **44** for I am the LORD

your God and you are to sanctify yourselves and be holy because I am holy. You must not defile yourselves by any of the swarming things that creep on the ground, **45** for I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God, and you are to be holy because I am holy.

46 This is the law of the land animals, the birds, all the living creatures that move in the water, and all the creatures that swarm on the land, **47** to distinguish between the unclean and the clean, between the living creatures that may be eaten and the living creatures that must not be eaten.”

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 12:1-8

Leviticus 12 - Cleansing After Childbirth

A. Ceremonial impurity after giving birth.

1. (1-4) When a male child is born.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. She shall then continue in the blood of *her* purification thirty-three days. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled.'"

a. If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean

seven days: The child was then circumcised on the eighth day, with the ceremonial uncleanness lasting an additional 33 days, for a total of 40

days of ceremonial impurity after giving birth to a male child.

b. She shall not touch any hallowed thing: The commanded time of ceremonial impurity should not be regarded as a negative attitude towards birth or child-bearing on God's part.

God *commands* child bearing, in that man is commanded to be fruitful and multiply (Gen.

1:28), children are regarded as a gift from God (Psa. 127:3), and a woman with many kids is considered blessed (Psa. 128:3).

i. The key to understanding this ceremony is to understand the idea of original sin. As wonderful as a new baby is, God wanted it to be remembered that with every birth another sinner was brought into the world, and the woman was here symbolically responsible for bringing a new sinner into the world.

ii. Perhaps just as importantly, the time of ceremonial impurity gave the new mother a time of rest and seclusion that would she no

doubt welcomed.

2. (5) When a female child is born.

But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity, and she shall continue in the blood of *her* purification sixty-six days.

a. If she bears a female child, then she

shall be unclean two weeks: The time period for each phase was double of that when giving birth to a son. For a the birth of a daughter, a woman was unclean for 14 days followed by 66 days.

b. She shall continue in the blood of her

purification sixty-six days: The longer period of ceremonial uncleanness for the birth of a daughter should not be understood as a penalty. Instead, it is linked to the idea stated in the previous verses - that the time of impurity is for the symbolic responsibility of bringing other sinners into the world. When giving birth to a female, a mother brings a sinner into the world who will bring still other sinners into the world.

i. Some also suggest the longer period of time in connection with the birth of a girl was because girls are usually smaller at birth, and this would allow more time for the mother's focused care and attention on the child. As well, since sons were more prized, the longer time at home for a mother with a new born girl would force the family to bond more deeply, over a more extended period of time with the new born girl.

B. The purification rite for cleansing after childbirth.

1. (6-7) The sacrifice required.

When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of

meeting. Then he shall offer it before the LORD, and make atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This *is* the law for her who has borne a male or a female.

a. **Then he shall offer it before the LORD, and make atonement for her:** This was a fairly standard sacrifice for atonement, holding the woman symbolically responsible for bringing another sinner into this world. The required sacrifice was the same **for her who has borne a male or a female.**

2. (8) Allowances for the poor.

And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons; one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.

a. **If she is not able to bring a lamb:** God knew that not every family in Israel could afford to bring a lamb for sacrifice at the birth of a child. Therefore, He also allowed the lesser sacrifices of **two turtledoves or two young pigeons.**

i. Jesus' family offered only a pair of turtledoves (Luk. 2:22-24) at birth. This shows that Jesus did not come from a wealthy family.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 “Tell the Israelites, ‘When a woman produces offspring and bears a male child, she will be unclean seven days, as she is unclean during the days of her menstruation. **3** On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin must be circumcised. **4** Then she will remain thirty-three days in blood purity. She must not touch anything holy and she must not enter the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled. **5** If she bears a female child, she will be impure fourteen days as during her menstrual flow, and she will remain sixty-six days in blood purity.

6 “When the days of her purification are completed for a son or for a daughter, she must bring a one year old lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering to the entrance of the Meeting Tent, to the priest. **7** The priest is to present it before the LORD and make atonement on her behalf, and she will be clean from her flow of blood. This is the law of the one who bears a child, for the male or the female child. **8** If she cannot afford a sheep, then she must take two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and one for a sin offering, and the priest is to make atonement on her behalf, and she will be clean.”

1 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron:

Guzik - Leviticus 13:1-59

Leviticus 13 - The Diagnosis of Leprosy

A. Instructions to the priests for diagnosing leprosy.

1. (1-8) The method of examination for leprosy.

And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

"When a man has on the skin of his body a swelling, a scab, or a bright spot, and it becomes on the skin of his body *like* a leprous sore, then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body; and if the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears *to be* deeper than the skin of his body, it *is* a leprous sore. Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce him unclean. But if the bright spot *is* white on the skin of his body, and does not appear *to be* deeper than the skin, and its hair has not turned white, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the sore seven days. And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore appears to be as it was, *and* the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall isolate him another seven days. Then the priest shall examine him again on the seventh day; and indeed *if* the sore has faded, *and* the sore has not spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it *is only* a scab, and he shall wash his

clothes and be clean. But if the scab should at all spread over the skin, after he has been seen by the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen by the priest again. And *if* the priest sees that the scab has indeed spread on the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* leprosy."

a. **The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body:** In this sense, the priests served as public health officers and diagnosed the disease from this carefully defined criteria, not from intuition or guessing.

b. **If the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a leprous sore:** The methodology in this passage erred on the

side of safety. If a person could not be pronounced "clean" with certainty, they were then isolated until they could be pronounced clean.

i. These judgments were based on sound medical diagnosis and concern. They were made more with the idea of protecting the community from the outbreak of disease than with the idea of the rights of the individual.

ii. "The Hebrew priest-physicians appear to have been the first in the ancient world to isolate persons suspected of infectious or contagious diseases." (Harrison)

iii. Illnesses such as smallpox, measles, and scarlet fever might start out with a skin condition considered to be leprosy - and the person would be isolated for the necessary time until the condition cleared up. This quarantine helped prevent the spread of these diseases among the people of Israel.

2. (9-44) More on the diagnosis of leprosy.

"When the leprous sore is on a person, then he shall be brought to the priest. And the priest shall examine *him*; and indeed *if* the swelling on the skin *is* white, and it has turned the hair white, and *there is* a spot of raw flesh in the swelling, it *is* an old leprosy on the skin of his body. The priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not isolate him, for he *is* unclean. And if leprosy breaks out all over the skin, and the leprosy covers all the skin of *the one who has* the sore, from his head to his foot, wherever the priest looks, then the priest shall consider; and indeed *if* the leprosy has covered all his body, he shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. It has all turned white. He *is* clean. But when raw flesh appears on him, he shall be unclean. And the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him to be unclean; *for* the raw flesh *is* unclean.

It *is* leprosy. Or if the raw flesh changes and turns white again, he shall come to the priest.

And the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the sore has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce *him* clean *who has* the sore. He *is* clean. If the body develops a boil in the skin, and it is healed, and in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling or a bright spot, reddish-white, then it shall be shown to the priest; and *if*, when the priest sees it, it indeed *appears* deeper than the skin, and its hair has turned white, the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore which has broken out of the boil. But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in it, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days; and if it should at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore. But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread, it *is* the scar of the boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean. Or if the body receives a burn on its skin by fire, and the raw *flesh* of the burn becomes a bright spot, reddish-white or white, then the priest shall examine it; and indeed *if* the hair of the bright

spot has turned white, and it appears deeper than the skin, it *is* leprosy broken out in the burn.

Therefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean.

It *is* a leprous sore. But if the priest examines it, and indeed *there are* no white hairs in the bright spot, and it *is* not deeper than the skin, but has faded, then the priest shall isolate him seven days. And the priest shall examine him on the seventh day. If it has at all spread over the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a leprous sore. But if the bright spot stays in one place, *and* has not spread on the skin, but has faded, it *is* a swelling from the burn. The priest shall pronounce him clean, for it *is* the scar from the burn. If a man or woman has a sore on the head or the beard, then the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed if it appears deeper than the skin, *and there is* in it thin yellow hair, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean. It *is* a scaly leprosy of the head or beard. But if the priest examines the scaly sore, and indeed it does not appear deeper than the skin, and *there is* no black hair in it, then the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale seven days. And on the seventh day the priest shall examine the sore; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the scale does not appear deeper than the skin, he shall shave himself, but the scale he shall not shave. And the priest shall isolate *the one who has* the scale another seven days. On the seventh day the priest shall examine the scale; and indeed *if* the scale has not spread over the skin, and does not appear deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean. He shall wash his clothes and be clean. But if the scale should at all spread over the skin after his cleansing, then the priest shall examine him; and indeed *if* the scale has spread over the skin, the priest need not seek for yellow hair. He *is* unclean. But if the scale appears to be at a standstill, and there is black hair grown up in it, the scale has healed. He *is* clean, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

If a man or a woman has bright spots on the skin of the body, *specifically* white bright spots, then the priest shall look; and indeed *if* the bright spots on the skin of the body *are* dull white, it *is* a white spot *that* grows on the skin. He *is* clean.

As for the man whose hair has fallen from his head, he *is* bald, *but* he *is* clean. He whose hair has fallen from his forehead, he *is* bald on the forehead, *but* he *is* clean. And if there is on the bald head or bald forehead a reddish-white sore, it *is* leprosy breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead. Then the priest shall examine it; and indeed *if* the swelling of the sore *is* reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, as the appearance of leprosy on the skin of the body, he is a leprous man. He *is* unclean. The priest shall surely pronounce him unclean; his sore *is* on his head.

a. **And the priest shall examine him:** This section clearly shows the very specific rules for making a specific diagnosis of leprosy. The specific details given in so many different situations emphasize that God did not want this to be guesswork but the result of careful examination. Such a serious diagnosis should not be guessed.

b. **It is leprosy:** Leprosy was dealt with so seriously because it was such a horrible disease, and it was also a dramatic picture of sin and its spiritual operation in human beings.

i. When leprosy first appears on your skin, it begins as small, red spots. Before too long they get bigger, and start to turn white, with a shiny or scaly appearance. Pretty soon the spots spread over the entire body and the hair begins to fall out - first from the head, then even from the eyebrows. As things get worse, the finger nails and toenails become loose; they start to rot and eventually fall

off. Then the joints of fingers and toes begin to rot and start to fall off piece by piece. The gums start shrinking and can't hold teeth anymore, so each of them is lost. Leprosy keeps eating away at the face until the nose is literally lost, and the palate and even eyes rot - and the victim wastes away until death.

ii. Leprosy is like sin in many ways. There are some good reasons why many ancient rabbis considered a leper as someone already dead. Leprosy is like sin in that:

- It begins as nothing.
- It is painless in its first stages.
- It grows slowly.
- It often remits for a while and then returns.
- It numbs the senses - one cannot feel in the afflicted area.
- It causes decay and deformity.
- It gives a person a repulsive appearance.

iii. "These precautions were taken not merely for sanitary reasons, or to guard against contagion, for it is not certain that leprosy was contagious, but in order that the people might be taught through the parable of leprosy, what a fearful and loathsome thing sin is in the sight of God." (Taylor) iv. "Leprosy was indeed nothing short of a living death, a poisoning of the springs, a corrupting of all the humours of life; a dissolution little by little of the whole body, so that one limb after another actually decayed and fell away." (Trench)

3. (45-46) The result of leprosy.

"Now the leper on whom the sore *is*, his clothes shall be torn and his head bare; and he shall cover his mustache, and cry, 'Unclean! Unclean!'

He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He *is* unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling *shall be* outside the camp."

a. His clothes shall be torn and his head

bare: Once the diagnosis of leprosy was confirmed, everything changed for the leper.

They lived in a perpetual state of mourning and in a perpetual state of public disgrace (**he shall . . . cry "Unclean! Unclean!"**).

Furthermore, they lived in a perpetual state of isolation (**he shall dwell alone**).

b. He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone: As stringent as all this was, eventually the Jews went further. In the days of Jesus many Jews thought two things about a leper: *You are the walking dead and you deserve this because this is the punishment of God against you.*

i. Jewish custom said that you should not even greet a leper, and you had to stay six feet away from a leper. One Rabbi bragged that he would not even buy an egg on a street where he saw a leper, and another boasted that he threw rocks at lepers to keep them far from him. Rabbis didn't even allow a leper to wash his face.

ii. But Jesus was different. He loved lepers; He touched them and healed them when they had no hope at all (Mat. 8:1-4 and Luk. 17:11-19).

iii. Because of modern drugs and treatments, leprosy is almost unknown in the western world - the United States' only two leper colonies have been shut down. But worldwide there are some 15 million lepers, almost all of them in third-world nations.

4. (47-59) Leprosy in a garment.

"Also, if a garment has a leprous plague in it, *whether it is* a woolen garment or a linen garment, whether *it is* in the warp or woof of linen or wool, whether in leather or in anything made of leather, and if the plague is greenish or reddish in the garment or in the leather, whether in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, it *is* a leprous plague and shall be shown to the priest. The priest shall examine the plague and isolate *that which* has the plague seven days. And he shall examine the plague on the seventh day. If the plague has spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, in the leather *or* in anything made of leather, the plague *is* an active leprosy. It *is* unclean. He shall therefore burn that garment in which is the plague, whether warp or woof, in wool or in linen, or anything of leather, for it *is* an active leprosy; *the garment* shall be burned in the fire.

But if the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, then the priest shall command that they wash *the thing* in which *is* the plague; and he shall isolate it another seven days. Then the priest shall examine the plague after it has been washed; and indeed *if* the plague has not changed its color, though the plague has not spread, it *is* unclean, and you shall burn it in the fire; it continues eating away, *whether* the damage *is* outside or inside. If the priest examines *it*, and indeed the plague has faded after washing it, then he shall tear it out of the garment, whether out of the warp or out of the woof, or out of the leather. But if it appears again in the garment, either in the warp or in the woof, or in anything made of leather, it *is* a spreading *plague*; you shall burn with fire that in which is the plague. And if you wash the garment, either warp or woof, or whatever is made of leather, if the plague has disappeared from it, then it shall be washed a second time, and shall be clean.

This *is* the law of the leprous plague in a garment of wool or linen, either in the warp or woof, or in anything made of leather, to pronounce it clean or to pronounce it unclean."

a. **If a garment has a leprous plague in it:** In Old Testament times, the term *leprosy* had a broad definition and could include some forms of mold or fungi.

b. **The priest shall examine the plague:** The priests had to make careful determination to see if a garment might pass on a contagious disease or if it could still be used.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 "When someone has a swelling or a scab or a bright spot on the skin of his body that may become a diseased infection, he must be brought to Aaron the priest or one of his sons, the priests. **3** The priest must then examine the infection on the skin of the body, and if the hair in the infection has turned white and the infection appears to be deeper than the skin of the body, then it is a diseased infection, so when the priest examines it he must pronounce the person unclean.

4 "If it is a white bright spot on the skin of his body, but it does not appear to be deeper than the skin, and the hair has not turned white, then the priest is to quarantine the person with the infection for seven days. **5** The priest must then examine it on the seventh day, and if, as far as he can see, the infection has stayed the same and has not spread on the skin, then the priest is to quarantine the person for another seven days. **6** The priest must then examine it again on the seventh day, and if the infection has faded and has not spread on the skin, then the priest is to pronounce the person clean. It is a scab, so he must wash his clothes and be clean. **7** If, however, the scab is spreading further on the skin after he has shown himself to the priest for his purification, then he must show himself to the priest a second time. **8** The priest must then examine it, and if the

scab has spread on the skin, then the priest is to pronounce the person unclean. It is a disease.

9 “When someone has a diseased infection, he must be brought to the priest. **10** The priest will then examine it, and if a white swelling is on the skin, it has turned the hair white, and there is raw flesh in the swelling, **11** it is a chronic disease on the skin of his body, so the priest is to pronounce him unclean. The priest must not merely quarantine him, for he is unclean. **12** If, however, the disease breaks out on the skin so that the disease covers all the skin of the person with the infection from his head to his feet, as far as the priest can see, **13** the priest must then examine it, and if the disease covers his whole body, he is to pronounce the person with the infection clean. He has turned all white, so he is clean. **14** But whenever raw flesh appears in it he will be unclean, **15** so the priest is to examine the raw flesh and pronounce him unclean – it is diseased. **16** If, however, the raw flesh once again turns white, then he must come to the priest. **17** The priest will then examine it, and if the infection has turned white, the priest is to pronounce the person with the infection clean – he is clean.

18 “When someone’s body has a boil on its skin and it heals, **19** and in the place of the boil there is a white swelling or a reddish white bright spot, he must show himself to the priest. **20** The priest will then examine it, and if it appears to be deeper than the skin and its hair has turned white, then the priest is to pronounce the person unclean. It is a diseased infection that has broken out in the boil. **21** If, however, the priest examines it, and there is no white hair in it, it is not deeper than the skin, and it has faded, then the priest is to quarantine him for seven days. **22** If it is spreading further on the skin, then the priest is to pronounce him unclean. It is an infection.

23 But if the bright spot stays in its place and has not spread, it is the scar of the boil, so the priest is to pronounce him clean.

24 “When a body has a burn on its skin and the raw area of the burn becomes a reddish white or white bright spot, **25** the priest must examine it, and if the hair has turned white in the bright spot and it appears to be deeper than the skin, it is a disease that has broken out in the burn. The priest is to pronounce the person unclean. It is a diseased infection. **26** If, however, the priest examines it and there is no white hair in the bright spot, it is not deeper than the skin, and it has faded, then the priest is to quarantine him for seven days. **27** The priest must then examine it on the seventh day, and if it is spreading further on the skin, then the priest is to pronounce him unclean. It is a diseased infection. **28** But if the bright spot stays in its place, has not spread on the skin, and it has faded, then it is the swelling of the burn, so the priest is to pronounce him clean, because it is the scar of the burn.

29 “When a man or a woman has an infection on the head or in the beard, **30** the priest is to examine the infection, and if it appears to be deeper than the skin and the hair in it is reddish yellow and thin, then the priest is to pronounce the person unclean. It is scall, a disease of the head or the beard. **31** But if the priest examines the scall infection and it does not appear to be deeper than the skin, and there is no black hair in it, then the priest is to quarantine the person with the scall infection for seven days. **32** The priest must then examine the infection on the seventh day, and if the scall has not spread, there is no reddish yellow hair in it, and the scall does not appear to be deeper than the skin, **33** then the individual is to shave himself, but he must not shave the area affected by the scall, and the priest is to quarantine the person with the scall for another seven days. **34** The priest must then examine the scall on the seventh day, and if the scall has not spread on the skin and it does not appear to be deeper than the skin, then the priest is to pronounce him clean.

So he is to wash his clothes and be clean. **35** If, however, the scall spreads further on the skin after his purification, **36** then the priest is to examine it, and if the scall has spread on the skin the priest is not to search further for reddish yellow hair. The person is unclean. **37** If, as far as the priest can see, the scall has stayed the same and black hair has sprouted in it, the scall has been healed; the person is clean. So the priest is to pronounce him clean.

38 “When a man or a woman has bright spots – white bright spots – on the skin of their body, **39** the priest is to examine them, and if the bright spots on the skin of their body are faded white, it is a harmless rash that has broken out on the skin. The person is clean.

40 “When a man’s head is bare so that he is balding in back, he is clean. **41** If his head is bare on the forehead so that he is balding in front, he is clean. **42** But if there is a reddish white infection in the back or front bald area, it is a disease breaking out in his back or front bald area. **43**

The priest is to examine it, and if the swelling of the infection is reddish white in the back or front bald area like the appearance of a disease on the skin of the body, **44** he is a diseased man. He is unclean. The priest must surely pronounce him unclean because of his infection on his head.

45 “As for the diseased person who has the infection, his clothes must be torn, the hair of his head must be unbound, he must cover his mustache, and he must call out ‘Unclean! Unclean!’ **46** The whole time he has the infection he will be continually unclean. He must live in isolation, and his place of residence must be outside the camp.

47 “When a garment has a diseased infection in it, whether a wool or linen garment, **48** or in the warp or woof of the linen or the wool, or in leather or anything made of leather, **49** if the infection in the garment or leather or warp or woof or any article of leather is yellowish green or reddish, it is a diseased infection and it must be shown to the priest. **50** The priest is to examine and then quarantine the article with

the infection for seven days. **51** He must then examine the infection on the seventh day. If the infection has spread in the garment, or in the warp, or in the woof, or in the leather – whatever the article into which the leather was made – the infection is a malignant disease. It is unclean. **52** He must burn the garment or the warp or the woof, whether wool or linen, or any article of leather which has the infection in it. Because it is a malignant disease it must be burned up in the fire. **53** But if the priest examines it and the infection has not spread in the garment or in the warp or in the woof or in any article of leather, **54** the priest is to command that they wash whatever has the infection and quarantine it for another seven days. **55** The priest must then examine it after the infection has been washed out, and if the infection has not changed its appearance even though the infection has not spread, it is unclean. You must burn it up in the fire. It is a fungus, whether on the back side or front side of the article. **56** But if the priest has examined it and the infection has faded after it has been washed, he is to tear it out of the garment or the leather or the warp or the woof. **57** Then if it still appears again in the garment or the warp or the woof, or in any article of leather, it is an outbreak. Whatever has the infection in it you must burn up in the fire. **58** But the garment or the warp or the woof or any article of leather which you wash and infection disappears from it is to be washed a second time and it will be clean.”

59 This is the law of the diseased infection in the garment of wool or linen, or the warp or woof, or any article of leather, for pronouncing it clean or unclean.

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 14:1-57

Leviticus 14 - Rituals On the Cleansing of a

Leper

A. The sacrifice for a cleansed leper.

1. (1-9) The first seven days of the ritual.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest. And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine *him*; and indeed, *if* the leprosy is healed in the leper, then the priest shall

command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living *and* clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird *that was* killed over the running water. And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field. He who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean.

After that he shall come into the camp, and shall stay outside his tent seven days. But on the seventh day he shall shave all the hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows; all his hair he shall shave off. He shall wash his clothes and wash his body in water, and he shall be clean."

a. Then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds:

In this cleansing ceremony, one bird was killed in an earthen vessel over running water, and its blood was applied to a living bird, to some cedar wood, to some scarlet fabric, and to some hyssop. Then, using these things,

the blood was sprinkled on the one who was cleansed from leprosy. Then, the living bird was let go.

i. This seems to be a picture of Jesus' death and its spiritual application; a "heavenly"

being (as a bird is "of the heavens") dies in an earthen vessel, while remaining clean

(because of the running water). The death

of the bird is associated with blood and

water; the blood is connected with life

(applied to the living bird), and then applied to the one cleansed.

ii. **Cedar wood:** Cedar is extremely

resistant to disease and rot, and these

qualities may be the reason for including it

here - as well as a symbolic reference to the wood of the cross. Some even think the

cross Jesus was crucified on was made of cedar.

iii. The connection with hyssop is also

important. Jesus was offered drink from a

hyssop branch on the cross (Mat. 27:48),

and when David said *purge me with hyssop*

in Psa. 51:7, he was admitted that he was

as bad as a leper.

b. **He shall shave all the hair off his head and his**

beard and his eyebrows: After the sacrificial ceremony

with the birds, the cleansed leper had to wash their clothes

and shave off all of their hair. They started all over again, as

if they were a brand new baby.

i. Again, this seems to be an illustration of being "born again" - a completely new start.

2. (10-20) On the eighth day.

"And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs

without blemish, one ewe lamb of the first year without

blemish, three-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil

as a grain offering, and one log of oil. Then the priest who

makes *him* clean shall present the man who is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. And the priest shall take one male lamb and offer it as a

trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them *as* a wave offering before the LORD. Then he shall kill the lamb in the place where he kills the sin offering and the burnt offering, in a holy place; for as the sin offering *is* the priest's, so *is* the trespass offering. It *is* most holy. The priest shall take *some* of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put *it* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. And the priest shall take *some* of the log of oil, and pour *it* into the palm of his own left hand. Then the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that *is* in his left hand, and shall sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put *some* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the trespass offering. The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD. Then the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean."

a. On the eighth day he shall take two

male lambs without blemish: In completing the sacrifices for the cleansed leper, offerings were made on the eighth day and sacrificial

blood was applied to the right ear, the right thumb, and the right big toe, to sanctify and consecrate the cleansed leper. This was the

same way that the priest was consecrated.

b. And of the rest of the oil in his hand, the priest shall put some on the tip of the

right ear of him who is to be cleansed: On the eighth day, oil was also applied to the cleansed leper. It was both sprinkled on his body in general and then applied to the ear, thumb, and toe just as the blood was. Each of these places on the body was meant to be anointed with oil.

i. Therefore, a cleansed leper had a special calling and a special anointing. One could not go through such a ritual as this and not be changed.

ii. Since leprosy is a picture of sin, we see how this ritual has spiritual application to every sinner set free by Jesus.

iii. Since leprosy had no natural cure, it was certain that this ritual was rarely performed - and when it was performed at the command of Jesus (Luk. 5:12-14), it must have been a great testimony to the priests at the temple.

3. (21-32) Provisions for the poor to fulfill the ritual for a cleansed leper.

"But if he *is* poor and cannot afford it, then he shall take one male lamb *as* a trespass offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, one-tenth *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, a log of oil, and two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to afford: one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. He shall bring them to the priest on the eighth day for his cleansing, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, before the LORD. And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them *as* a wave offering before the LORD. Then he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take *some* of the blood

of the trespass offering and put *it* on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. And the priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand. Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger *some* of the oil that *is* in his left hand seven times before the LORD. And the priest shall put *some* of the oil that *is* in his hand on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the trespass offering.

The rest of the oil that *is* in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be

cleansed, to make atonement for him before the LORD. And he shall offer one of the turtledoves or young pigeons, such as he can afford; such as he is able to afford, the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a burnt offering, with the grain offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him who is to be cleansed before the LORD. This *is* the law *for one* who had a leprous sore, who cannot afford the usual cleansing."

B. Leprosy in a house.

1. (33-42) Diagnosis of leprosy in a house.

And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

"When you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give you as a possession, and I put the leprous plague in a house in the land of your possession, and he who owns the house comes

and tells the priest, saying, 'It seems to me that *there is* some plague in the house,' then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest goes *into it* to examine the plague, that all that *is* in the house may not be made unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to examine the house. And he shall examine the plague; and indeed *if* the plague *is* on the walls of the house with ingrained streaks,

greenish or reddish, which appear to be deep in the wall, then the priest shall go out of the house, to the door of the

house, and shut up the house seven days. And the priest shall come

again on the seventh day and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread on the walls of the house, then the priest shall command that they take

away the stones in which *is* the plague, and they shall cast them into an unclean place outside the city. And he shall cause the house to be scraped inside, all around, and the dust that they scrape off they shall pour out in an unclean place

outside the city. Then they shall take other stones and put *them* in the place of *those* stones, and he shall take other mortar and plaster the house."

a. It seems to me that there is some

plague in the house: Just as with the instructions regarding leprosy in garments in Leviticus 13, this uses a broad defining of leprosy that can include fungus and mold infestations. These instructions helped promote hygienic dwellings in Israel.

2. (43-53) Cleansing the house infested with leprosy.

"Now if the plague comes back and breaks out in the house, after he has taken away the stones, after he has scraped the house, and after it is plastered, then the priest shall come and look; and indeed *if* the plague has spread in the house, it *is* an active leprosy in the house. It *is* unclean.

And he shall break down the house, its stones, its timber, and all the plaster of the house, and he shall carry *them* outside the city to an unclean place. Moreover he who goes into the house at all while it is shut up shall be unclean until evening. And he who lies down in the house shall wash his clothes, and he who eats in the house shall wash his clothes. But if the priest comes in and examines *it*, and indeed the plague has not spread in the house after the house was

plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed. And he shall take, to cleanse the house, two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. Then he shall kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water; and he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven

times. And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and the running water and the living bird, with the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet. Then he shall let the living bird loose outside the city in the open field, and make

atonement for the house, and it shall be clean."

3. (54-57) Summation of the laws of leprosy.

"This *is* the law for any leprous sore and scale, for the leprosy of a garment and of a house, for a swelling and a scab and a bright spot, to teach when *it is* unclean and when *it is* clean. This *is* the law of leprosy."

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 "This is the law of the diseased person on the day of his purification, when he is brought to the priest. **3** The priest is to go outside the camp and examine the infection.

If the infection of the diseased person has been healed, **4** then the priest will command that two live clean birds, a piece of cedar wood, a scrap of crimson fabric, and some twigs of hyssop be taken up for the one being cleansed. **5**

The priest will then command that one bird be slaughtered into a clay vessel over fresh water. **6** Then he is to take the live bird along with the piece of cedar wood, the scrap of crimson fabric, and the twigs of hyssop, and he is to dip them and the live bird in the blood of the bird slaughtered over the fresh water, **7** and sprinkle it seven times on the one being cleansed from the disease, pronounce him clean, and send the live bird away over the open countryside.

8 “The one being cleansed must then wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe in water, and so be clean.

Then afterward he may enter the camp, but he must live outside his tent seven days. **9** When the seventh day comes he must shave all his hair – his head, his beard, his eyebrows, all his hair – and he must wash his clothes, bathe his body in water, and so be clean.

10 “On the eighth day he must take two flawless male lambs, one flawless yearling female lamb, three-tenths of an ephah of choice wheat flour as a grain offering mixed with olive oil, and one log of olive oil, **11** and the priest who pronounces him clean will have the man who is being cleansed stand along with these offerings before the LORD at the entrance of the Meeting Tent.

12 “The priest is to take one male lamb and present it for a guilt offering along with the log of olive oil and present them as a wave offering before the LORD. **13** He must then slaughter the male lamb in the place where the sin offering and the burnt offering are slaughtered, in the sanctuary, because, like the sin offering, the guilt offering belongs to the priest; it is most holy. **14** Then the priest is to take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the right earlobe of the one being cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. **15** The priest will then take some of the log of olive oil and pour it into his own left hand. **16** Then the priest is to dip his right forefinger into the olive oil that is in his left hand, and sprinkle some of the olive oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. **17** The priest will then put some of the rest of the olive oil that is in his hand on the right earlobe of the one being cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the guilt offering, **18** and the remainder of the olive oil that is in his hand the priest is to put on the head of the one being cleansed. So the priest is to make atonement for him before the LORD.

19 “The priest must then perform the sin offering and make atonement for the one being cleansed from his impurity. After that he is to slaughter the burnt offering, **20** and the priest is to offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. So the priest is to make atonement for him and he will be clean.

21 “If the person is poor and does not have sufficient means, he must take one male lamb as a guilt offering for a wave offering to make atonement for himself, one-tenth of an ephah of choice wheat flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering, a log of olive oil, **22** and two turtledoves or two young pigeons, which are within his means. One will be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering.

23 “On the eighth day he must bring them for his purification to the priest at the entrance of the Meeting Tent before the LORD, **24** and the priest is to take the male lamb of the guilt offering and the log of olive oil and wave them as a wave offering before the LORD. **25** Then he is to slaughter the male lamb of the guilt offering, and the priest is to take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the right earlobe of the one being cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.

26 The priest will then pour some of the olive oil into his own left hand, **27** and sprinkle some of the olive oil that is in his left hand with his right forefinger seven times before the LORD. **28** Then the priest is to put some of the olive oil that is in his hand on the right earlobe of the one being cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the guilt offering, **29** and the remainder of the olive oil that is in the hand of the priest he is to put on the head of the one being cleansed to make atonement for him before the LORD.

30 “He will then make one of the turtledoves or young pigeons, which are within his means, **31** a sin offering and the other a burnt offering along with the grain offering. So the priest is to make atonement for the one being cleansed

before the LORD. **32** This is the law of the one in whom there is a diseased infection, who does not have sufficient means for his purification.”

33 The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron: **34** “When you enter the land of Canaan which I am about to give to you for a possession, and I put a diseased infection in a house in the land you are to possess, **35** then whoever owns the house must come and declare to the priest, ‘Something like an infection is visible to me in the house.’ **36** Then the priest will command that the house be cleared before the priest enters to examine the infection so that everything in the house does not become unclean, and afterward the priest will enter to examine the house. **37** He is to examine the infection, and if the infection in the walls of the house consists of yellowish green or reddish eruptions, and it appears to be deeper than the surface of the wall, **38** then the priest is to go out of the house to the doorway of the house and quarantine the house for seven days. **39** The priest must return on the seventh day and examine it, and if the infection has spread in the walls of the house, **40**

then the priest is to command that the stones that had the infection in them be pulled and thrown outside the city into an unclean place. **41** Then he is to have the house scraped all around on the inside, and the plaster which is scraped off must be dumped outside the city into an unclean place. **42** They are then to take other stones and replace those stones, and he is to take other plaster and replaster the house.

43 “If the infection returns and breaks out in the house after he has pulled out the stones, scraped the house, and it is replastered, **44** the priest is to come and examine it, and if the infection has spread in the house, it is a malignant disease in the house. It is unclean. **45** He must tear down the house, its stones, its wood, and all the plaster of the house, and bring all of it outside the city to an unclean place. **46** Anyone who enters the house all the days the priest has quarantined it will be unclean until evening. **47**

Anyone who lies down in the house must wash his clothes.
Anyone who eats in the house must wash his clothes.

48 “If, however, the priest enters and examines it, and the infection has not spread in the house after the house has been replastered, then the priest is to pronounce the house clean because the infection has been healed. **49**

Then he is to take two birds, a piece of cedar wood, a scrap of crimson fabric, and some twigs of hyssop to decontaminate the house, **50** and he is to slaughter one bird into a clay vessel over fresh water. **51** He must then take the piece of cedar wood, the twigs of hyssop, the scrap of crimson fabric, and the live bird, and dip them in the blood of the slaughtered bird and in the fresh water, and sprinkle the house seven times. **52** So he is to decontaminate the house with the blood of the bird, the fresh water, the live bird, the piece of cedar wood, the twigs of hyssop, and the scrap of crimson fabric, **53** and he is to send the live bird away outside the city into the open countryside. So he is to make atonement for the house and it will be clean.

54 “This is the law for all diseased infections, for scall, **55** for the diseased garment, for the house, **56** for the swelling, for the scab, and for the bright spot, **57** to teach when something is unclean and when it is clean. This is the law for dealing with infectious disease.”

1 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron:

Guzik - Leviticus 15:1-33

Leviticus 15 - Laws Concerning Bodily

Discharges

A. Bodily discharges from a man.

1. (1-15) An abnormal bodily discharge.

And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them:

'When any man has a discharge from his body,

his discharge *is* unclean. And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge; whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is stopped up by his discharge, it *is* his uncleanness. Every bed is unclean on which he who has the discharge lies, and everything on which he sits shall be unclean. And whoever touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. He who sits on anything on which he who has the discharge sat shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And he who touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. If he who has the discharge spits on him who is clean, then he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be

unclean until evening. Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean.

Whoever touches anything that was under him

shall be unclean until evening. He who carries *any of* those things shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And whomever the one who has the discharge touches, and has not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. The vessel of earth that he who has the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water. And when he who has a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, then he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, wash his clothes, and bathe his

body in running water; then he shall be clean. 'On the eighth day he shall take for himself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and give them to the priest. Then the priest shall offer them, the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a burnt offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD because of his discharge.'

a. **When any man has a discharge from his**

body, his discharge is unclean: The idea is of some obviously abnormal genital discharge, indicating some type of disease. When this occurs, the man was to be somewhat isolated in order not to pass on the infection to anyone else.

b. **So the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD because of his**

discharge: After the discharge had stopped, a sacrifice had to be made.

2. (16-18) Normal bodily discharge.

'If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening. And any garment and any leather on which there is semen, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening. Also, when a woman lies with a man, and *there is* an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.'

a. **If any man has an emission of semen:** When a man discharged semen (either accidentally or in sex), he had to cleanse himself and respect a brief time of ceremonial impurity.

b. **They shall bathe in water, and be unclean until evening:** In the case of **an emission of semen**, both the man and his wife needed to ceremonially cleanse themselves and respect a brief time of ceremonial impurity.

B. Bodily discharges from a woman.

1. (19-24) Impurity during menstruation.

'If a woman has a discharge, *and* the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; also

everything that she sits on shall be unclean.

Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

And whoever touches anything that she sat on shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. If *anything* is on *her* bed or on anything on which she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening. And if any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.'

2. (25-30) Unusual or abnormal bodily discharge.

'If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her *customary* impurity, or if it runs beyond her *usual time of* impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her *customary* impurity.

She *shall be* unclean. Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. But if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and bring them to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then the priest shall offer the one *as* a sin offering and the other *as* a burnt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for the discharge of her uncleanness.'

3. (31-33) Summation of the laws of bodily discharge.

"Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that *is* among them. This *is* the law for one who has a discharge, and *for him* who emits semen and is unclean thereby, and for her who is indisposed because of her *customary* impurity, and for one who has a discharge, either man or woman, and for him who lies with her who is unclean."

a. **When they defile my tabernacle:** None of these discharges made a man or a woman *sinful*, only ceremonially unclean. This did promote hygiene in ancient Israel, yet discharges of semen and menstruation were so regarded, not because there was anything inherently wrong with them, but because the two are connected with symbols of life and redemption, **blood** and **seed**.

b. **My tabernacle that is among them:** This made an obvious separation between sex and the worship of God. To the modern world this seems normal, but in the ancient world it was common to worship the gods by having sex with temple prostitutes. God did not want this association in His worship.

i. It is important for us to regard these laws of cleanliness in a New Testament

perspective. In Mar. 7:1-9 Jesus criticized the Pharisees for their over-emphasis on ceremonial cleanliness and their lack of regard for *internal* cleanliness. These laws were meant to have both hygienic reasons and spiritual applications; they were never

intended as the way to be right with God.

ii. In Acts 15, the early Christian community properly discerned the work and will of God

in the New Covenant: that under the New

Covenant, the believer was not bound to these laws of ritual purity. One could be a follower of Jesus without the ritual conformity to the Mosaic Law.

iii. Yet we need to remember that spiritual cleanliness in worship is important today. We also remember that Jesus is the One who makes us clean and fit for fellowship:

You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you (Joh. 15:3). As we receive from the Word of God, we are being cleansed.

iv. Our cleanliness is complete as we abide in Jesus: 1Jo. 1:7-9 - *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is unclean. **3**

Now this is his uncleanness in regard to his discharge - whether his body secretes his discharge or blocks his discharge, he is unclean. All the days that his body has a discharge or his body blocks his discharge, this is his uncleanness.

4 “Any bed the man with a discharge lies on will be unclean, and any furniture he sits on will be unclean. **5**

Anyone who touches his bed must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **6** The one who sits on the furniture the man with a discharge sits on must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **7** The one who touches the body of the man with a discharge must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **8** If the man with a discharge spits on a person who

is ceremonially clean, that person must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **9** Any means of riding the man with a discharge rides on will be unclean.

10 Anyone who touches anything that was under him will be unclean until evening, and the one who carries those items must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

11 Anyone whom the man with the discharge touches without having rinsed his hands in water must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **12**

A clay vessel which the man with the discharge touches must be broken, and any wooden utensil must be rinsed in water.

13 “When the man with the discharge becomes clean from his discharge he is to count off for himself seven days for his purification, and he must wash his clothes, bathe in fresh water, and be clean. **14** Then on the eighth day he is to take

for himself two turtledoves or two young pigeons, and he is to present himself before the LORD at the entrance of the Meeting Tent and give them to the priest, **15** and the priest is to make one of them a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. So the priest is to make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge.

16 “When a man has a seminal emission, he must bathe his whole body in water and be unclean until evening, **17**

and he must wash in water any clothing or leather that has semen on it, and it will be unclean until evening. **18**

When a man has sexual intercourse with a woman and there is a seminal emission, they must bathe in water and be unclean until evening.

19 “When a woman has a discharge and her discharge is blood from her body, she is to be in her menstruation seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean until evening. **20** Anything she lies on during her menstruation

will be unclean, and anything she sits on will be unclean. **21**

Anyone who touches her bed must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

22 Anyone who touches any furniture she sits on must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. **23** If there is something on the bed or on the furniture she sits on, when he touches it he will be unclean until evening, **24** and if a man actually has sexual intercourse with her so that her menstrual impurity touches him, then he will be unclean seven days and any bed he lies on will be unclean.

25 “When a woman’s discharge of blood flows many days not at the time of her menstruation, or if it flows beyond the time of her menstruation, all the days of her discharge of impurity will be like the days of her menstruation – she is unclean. **26** Any bed she lies on all the days of her discharge will be to her like the bed of her menstruation, any furniture she sits on will be unclean like the impurity of her menstruation, **27** and anyone who touches them will be unclean, and he must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

28 “If she becomes clean from her discharge, then she is to count off for herself seven days, and afterward she will be clean. **29** Then on the eighth day she must take for herself two turtledoves or two young pigeons and she must bring them to the priest at the entrance of the Meeting Tent, **30** and the priest is to make one a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. So the priest is to make atonement for her before the LORD from her discharge of impurity.

31 “Thus you are to set the Israelites apart from their impurity so that they do not die in their impurity by defiling my tabernacle which is in their midst. **32** This is the law of the one with a discharge: the one who has a seminal emission and becomes unclean by it, **33** the one who is sick in her menstruation, the one with a discharge, whether male or female, and a man who has sexual intercourse with an unclean woman.”

1 The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of Aaron’s two sons when they approached the presence of the LORD and died,

Guzik - Leviticus 16:1-34

Leviticus 16 - The Day of Atonement

A. Preparation for sacrifice on the Day of Atonement.

1. (1-2) How Aaron should not come into the Holy Place.

Now the LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered

profane fire before the LORD, and died; and the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at *just* any time into the Holy *Place* inside the veil, before the mercy seat which *is* on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat."

a. **The LORD spoke to Moses after the**

death of the two sons of Aaron: Nadab and Abihu were struck down by the LORD because they came into the Holy Place and offered

profane fire before the LORD (Leviticus 10).

b. **Tell Aaron your brother not to come at**

just any time into the Holy Place inside

the veil: Therefore, Aaron could not come into the Holy Place any time he pleased, but only at God's invitation and at the appointed time and place.

i. The same is true today: We can only come into God's Holy Place at His invitation.

Blessedly, the access has been opened wide because of Jesus' work on the cross for us.

Rom. 5:1-2 specifically says that because of Jesus' work on our behalf, we have standing access to God.

2. (3-5) What Aaron needs to bring with him when he goes into the Holy Place.

"Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy *Place*: with *the blood of* a young bull as a sin offering, and *of* a ram as a burnt offering. He shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired. These *are* holy garments. Therefore he shall wash his body in water, and

put them on. And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering."

a. **With the blood of a young bull as a sin offering:**

Aaron must come with sacrificial blood to cleanse his own sin and the sin of the nation.

b. **He shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body:** Aaron must come clothed with garments of humility. Over his ornate garments for *glory and for beauty* (Exo.

28:2), he wore a **holy linen tunic and the**

linen trousers. He was clothed in simple, humble white.

c. **He shall wash his body in water:** Aaron must come washed. Traditionally, this washing was done by immersion.

d. **He shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the**

goats: Aaron must come with two goats and one ram to complete the offering of atonement.

i. This was extensive preparation for an important day. To the ancient Jews the Day of Atonement was called "the great day" or sometimes even just "the day." It was and remains the only day of commanded fasting on the Jewish calendar. Modern Jews still regard *Yom Kippur* an important day of fasting, soul searching, and righting wrongs - yet they offer no sacrifice for sin.

B. What the High Priest does on the Day of Atonement.

1. (6-10) Casting lots to choose between the two goats.

"Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which *is* for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house. He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord's lot fell, and offer it *as* a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be

presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, *and* to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness."

a. Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin

offering, which is for himself: After the sacrificing the bull as a sin offering for himself (detailed in Lev. 16:11-14), the high priest cast lots to choose between the two goats.

i. The Talmud stipulated that the two goats be as alike as possible - in size, color, and value.

b. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other

lot for the scapegoat: One goat was **for the LORD** and would be sacrificed as a sin offering and one goat would be **the scapegoat** and would be released to the wilderness. Each goat had an important role on the Day of Atonement.

i. The **scapegoat** was literally the "escape goat." It escaped death and went into the wilderness. **Scapegoat** translates the Hebrew word *azazel*. "The meaning of this word is far from certain . . . The word may perhaps signify 'removal' or 'dismissal' . . .

Probably the best explanation is that the word was a rare technical term describing 'complete removal.'" (Harrison)

ii. There were elaborate Jewish traditions about *Azazel*, saying he was a demonic being that the Messiah would defeat. More likely, *azazel* simply referred to this goat's function of symbolically removing sin from Israel.

2. (11-14) The bull for the sin offering.

"And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which *is* for himself. Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring *it* inside the veil. And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* on the Testimony, lest he die. He shall

take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east *side*; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times."

a. **The bull of the sin offering, which is for himself:**

This sin offering was **for himself and for his house**. Before the high priest could make atonement for the nation, he had to make atonement for himself.

i. When Jesus offered a perfect atonement

for sin, He did not need to make a sin

offering for Himself: *For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have*

weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. (Heb. 7:26-28)

b. **He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat:**

The blood of this sin offering had to be sprinkled on the **mercy seat**, which was the lid to the ark of the covenant, which sat in the Holy Place. When he came into the Holy Place, he had to come with a smoking censer

that gave off a cloud of incense.

i. According to Jewish tradition, it was on the Day of Atonement that the high priest - and

only the high priest - could pronounce the

name of God, the sacred Tetragrammaton

YHWH. When he entered the Holy Place with

the blood of the goat set apart to the LORD,

he would utter the name. He was the only

one, and that was the only time, when the

name could be uttered, and the high priest

was to pass on the exact pronunciation of

the name of God to his successor with his dying breath.

c. **Before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood:** The idea was that God was *above the mercy seat* (*I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat*, Lev. 16:2), and as He looked down upon the ark of the covenant, He saw the sin of man. Man's sin was represented by the items in the ark of the covenant: Manna Israel complained about, tablets of law Israel broke, and a budding almond rod given as a response to Israel's rebellion. Then, the high priest sprinkled atoning blood seven times on the mercy seat - covering over the emblems of Israel's sin. God saw the blood cover over the sin, and atonement was made.

i. This captures the thought behind the Hebrew word for atonement: *Kipper*, which means, "to cover." Sin was not *removed*, but *covered over* by sacrificial blood. The New Testament idea of atonement is that our sin is not merely covered, but removed - taken away, so there is no barrier between God and man any longer.

3. (15-19) The goat selected for sacrifice is offered to make atonement for the tabernacle.

"Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which *is* for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. So he shall make atonement for the Holy *Place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness. There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy *Place*, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel.

And he shall go out to the altar that *is* before the LORD, and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and consecrate it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."

a. Then he shall kill the goat of the sin

offering: The goat that was sacrificed was also like Jesus, in that the goat was spotless, was from the people of Israel (Lev. 16:5), was chosen by God (Lev. 16:8), and the goat's blood was taken to the Holy Place to provide atonement.

b. So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of

the children of Israel: This blood was applied to the mercy seat, but also the tabernacle and altar itself. This blood cleansed the house of God itself, which was made ceremonially unclean by man's constant touch.

4. (20-22) The release of the scapegoat.

"And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness."

a. When he has made an end of atoning

for the Holy Place: After the high priest's sin was dealt with and after the tabernacle itself was cleansed, Aaron then dealt with the sin of the people through the transference of sin and release of the scapegoat.

b. He shall release the goat in the

wilderness: This was a perfect demonstration of atonement under the Old Covenant, before the completed work of Jesus on the cross. Sin could be put away, but never really eliminated.

The sin-bearing goat, bearing the sin of Israel, was alive somewhere but put away.

i. One ancient Rabbi says the goat was taken ten miles out of Jerusalem, and there were refreshment stations each mile along the way for the man who escorted the goat out of the city. He finally went the ten miles and then watched the goat wander off until he could see the goat no more. Then the sin was gone and the Day of Atonement was considered complete.

ii. Sin was put away - but not completely. How could one know for certain that God had accepted the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement? What if someone accidentally encountered the scapegoat in the wilderness? What if the scapegoat wandered back among the people of Israel? Through their traditions, the Jews began to deal with these concerns. "On the head of the *scapegoat* a piece of scarlet cloth was tied, and the tradition of the Jews states that if God accepted the sacrifice the scarlet cloth turned *white* while the goat was led to the desert; but if God had not accepted this expiation, the *redness* continued, and the rest of the year was spent in mourning." (Clarke) Through this, they thought to have a *certainty* about the work of atonement.

iii. It seems that later the Jewish people altered the ceremony so the goat would be killed and have no chance of contacting Israel again. "The Jews write, that this goat was carried to the mountain called Azazel,

whence the goat is so called; and that there he was cast headlong; and that the red string by which he was led turned white when God was pleased with the Israelites, otherwise it remained red; and they mourned all that year." (Poole)

iv. "And the ancient Hebrews write, that forty years before the destruction of the temple, which was about the time of Christ's death, this red string turned no more white." (Poole) When Jesus' blood red body rose from the dead, clothed with white garments, it was proof forever that the red had changed to white - and atonement at the cross was perfect and complete.

5. (23-28) Completion of the sacrifices.

"Then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting, shall take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the Holy *Place*, and shall leave them there. And he shall wash his body with water in a holy place, put on his garments, come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people. The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar. And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. The bull *for* the sin offering and the goat *for* the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy *Place*, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal. Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp."

a. **He shall wash his body with water in a**

holy place: After releasing the scapegoat, the high priest and the one who released the scapegoat washed and the sin offering and

burnt offering would be completed.

b. **Take off the linen garments . . . put on his garments:** When atonement was finished, the priest emerged from the tabernacle in glory - with the humble garments taken off and in his normal clothes for glory and beauty.

i. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest was humble (Lev. 16:4), he was spotless (Lev. 16:11), and he was alone (Lev. 16:11-14), and he emerged victorious - just like Jesus was in accomplishing our work of atonement.

6. (29-31) What the people did on the Day of Atonement.

" *This* shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether* a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. For on that day *the priest* shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. It *is* a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. *It is* a statute forever."

a. **You shall afflict your souls:** In contrast to other national days of gathering, the Day of Atonement was a day to **afflict your souls**.

That is, it was a day of fasting and rest - **a sabbath of solemn rest**.

i. Modern Jews who do observe the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) typically fast for that day. Yet they have no sacrifice for sins.

· Some Jews consider *their own sacrifice* to be a suitable substitute; today some sacrifice a rooster for every male in the family, and a hen for every female, on the day of atonement - a vague shadow of obedience to Leviticus 16.

- Some Jews consider *charity* a suitable substitute for sacrifice; the word "charity" in modern Hebrew is the same as the word for "righteousness."
- Some Jews consider *sufferings* a suitable substitute for sacrifice; among the Jews of Eastern Europe there used to be custom to inflict 39 lashes upon themselves on the Day of Atonement.
- Some Jews consider *good works* or *the study of the law* as suitable substitutes for sacrifice.

b. That you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD: God wanted them to afflict themselves so they could identify with the sacrifice for sin. Afflicting the soul brought the Israelite into sympathy with the afflicted sacrificial victim, even as the believer identifies with Jesus Christ on the cross.

c. It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you: This **sabbath of solemn rest** demanded a cessation of works, even as the believer is justified and finds atonement apart from his own works, being justified by the work of another. This means that all the charity, all the sufferings, all the study of the law in the world cannot atone for sin - we must rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

i. Yom Kippur ends with the blowing of the Shofar, the trumpet that heralds the coming of the Messiah. An ancient prayer in a Jewish Day of Atonement liturgy reads:

Our righteous Messiah has departed from us,

We are horror-stricken, and have none to justify us.

Our iniquities and the yoke of our transgressions

He carries who is wounded because of our transgressions

He bears on His shoulder the burden of our sins.

To find pardon for all our iniquities.

By His stripes we shall be healed -

O Eternal One, it is time that thou should create Him anew!

7. (32-34) What the high priest does on the Day of Atonement.

"And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year." And he did as the LORD commanded Moses."

a. He shall make atonement for the Holy

Sanctuary: This meant the priest and only the priest. *Only* once a year could any man - and then, only one man - enter into the Holy Place and come near the presence of God.

b. For all their sins, once a year: To this summary of what was previously described in the chapter is the reminder that this is to be done **once a year**.

i. *Every year, year after year, this atonement had to be made, showing it was never completed. In contrast, Jesus provided a*

finished work: For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another; He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the

judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. (Heb. 9:24-28)

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** and the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother that he must not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil-canopy in front of the atonement plate that is on the ark so that he may not die, for I will appear in the cloud over the atonement plate.

3 "In this way Aaron is to enter into the sanctuary - with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. **4** He must put on a holy linen tunic, linen leggings are to cover his body, and he is to wrap himself with a linen sash and wrap his head with a linen turban.

They are holy garments, so he must bathe his body in water and put them on. **5** He must also take two male goats from the congregation of the Israelites for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. **6** Then Aaron is to present the sin offering bull which is for himself and is to make atonement on behalf of himself and his household. **7** He must then take the two goats and stand them before the LORD at the entrance of the Meeting Tent, **8** and Aaron is to cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the LORD and one lot for Azazel. **9** Aaron must then present the goat which has been designated by lot for the LORD, and he is to make it a sin offering, **10** but the goat which has been designated by lot for Azazel is to be stood alive before the LORD to make atonement on it by sending it away to Azazel into the wilderness.

11 "Aaron is to present the sin offering bull which is for himself, and he is to make atonement on behalf of himself and his household. He is to slaughter the sin offering bull which is for himself, **12** and take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the LORD and a full double handful of finely ground fragrant incense, and bring them inside the

veil-canopy. **13** He must then put the incense on the fire before the LORD, and the cloud of incense will cover the atonement plate which is above the ark of the testimony, so that he will not die. **14** Then he is to take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the eastern face of the atonement plate, and in front of the atonement plate he is to sprinkle some of the blood seven times with his finger.

15 “He must then slaughter the sin offering goat which is for the people. He is to bring its blood inside the veil-canopy, and he is to do with its blood just as he did to the blood of the bull: He is to sprinkle it on the atonement plate and in front of the atonement plate. **16** So he is to make atonement for the holy place from the impurities of the Israelites and from their transgressions with regard to all their sins, and thus he is to do for the Meeting Tent which resides with them in the midst of their impurities. **17**

Nobody is to be in the Meeting Tent when he enters to make atonement in the holy place until he goes out, and he has made atonement on his behalf, on behalf of his household, and on behalf of the whole assembly of Israel.

18 “Then he is to go out to the altar which is before the LORD and make atonement for it. He is to take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it all around on the horns of the altar. **19** Then he is to sprinkle on it some of the blood with his finger seven times, and cleanse and consecrate it from the impurities of the Israelites.

20 “When he has finished purifying the holy place, the Meeting Tent, and the altar, he is to present the live goat.

21 Aaron is to lay his two hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the Israelites and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins, and thus he is to put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man standing ready. **22** The goat is to bear on itself all their iniquities into an

inaccessible land, so he is to send the goat away in the wilderness.

23 “Aaron must then enter the Meeting Tent and take off the linen garments which he had put on when he entered the sanctuary, and leave them there. **24** Then he must bathe his body in water in a holy place, put on his clothes, and go out and make his burnt offering and the people’s burnt offering. So he is to make atonement on behalf of himself and the people.

25 “Then he is to offer up the fat of the sin offering in smoke on the altar, **26** and the one who sent the goat away to Azazel must wash his clothes, bathe his body in water, and afterward he may reenter the camp. **27** The bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought to make atonement in the holy place, must be brought outside the camp and their hide, their flesh, and their dung must be burned up, **28** and the one who burns them must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may reenter the camp.

29 “This is to be a perpetual statute for you. In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you must humble yourselves and do no work of any kind, both the native citizen and the foreigner who resides in your midst, **30** for on this day atonement is to be made for you to cleanse you from all your sins; you must be clean before the LORD. **31** It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest for you, and you must humble yourselves. It is a perpetual statute.

32 “The priest who is anointed and ordained to act as high priest in place of his father is to make atonement. He is to put on the linen garments, the holy garments, **33** and he is to purify the Most Holy Place, he is to purify the Meeting Tent and the altar, and he is to make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. **34**

This is to be a perpetual statute for you to make atonement for the Israelites for all their sins once a year.”

So he did just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 17:1-16

Leviticus 17 - The Sanctity of Blood

A. Prohibition of sacrifice outside the tabernacle.

1. (1-4) Sacrifice must be at the tabernacle and by the appointed priests.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron, to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, 'This *is* the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying: "Whatever man of the house of Israel who kills an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or who kills *it* outside the camp, and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, the guilt of bloodshed shall be imputed to that man. He has shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people,""

a. **Bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting:** In the pagan world at that time, it was customary to offer sacrifice wherever one pleased. Altars were customarily be built on high hills, in forested areas, or at other special places.

b. **The guilt of bloodshed shall be imputed to that man:** This looser attitude towards the place of sacrifice may have been fine for the time of the patriarchs. Yet now with a centralized place of worship, the Israelites were not allowed to offer sacrifice any way they

pleased - they had to come to the tabernacle and have their sacrifice administered by the priests. If they disobeyed, they would be **cut off from among the people** - exiled from their community.

i. This command runs completely contrary to the way most people come to God in our culture. The modern world is characterized by an entirely individualistic way of coming to God, where each person makes up their own rules about dealing with God as they

see Him.

ii. In the book *Habits of the Heart*, Robert Bellah and his colleagues interviewed a young nurse named Sheila Larson, whom

they describe as representing many Americans' experience and views on religion.

Speaking about her own faith and how it operates in her life, she said: "I believe in God. I'm not a religious fanatic. I can't

remember the last time I went to church. My

faith has carried me a long way. It is

'Sheilaism.' Just my own little voice." This instinct for an individualistic, set-your-own-rules religion is given free reign in our modern world.

2. (5-9) The right way to bring sacrifice - to the tabernacle, through the priest.

"To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to the priest, and offer them *as peace offerings* to the LORD.

And the priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and burn the fat for a sweet aroma to the LORD. They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have

played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.'" Also you shall say to them:

'Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the LORD, that man shall be cut off from among his people.'

a. They shall no more offer sacrifices to

demons: There was a spiritual reality behind the pagan gods, but the reality was really demonic. In sacrificing to Baal, Ashtoreth, and others, they really worshipped demons.

i. Paul says essentially the same thing in 1Co. 10:20-21: *Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.* There is a sense in which all worship that is not directed to God is directed to the devil and his demons.

b. That man shall be cut off from among

his people: The demonic background to sacrifice justified this severe punishment of open idolatry.

B. Prohibition against eating blood.

1. (10-12) The prohibition stated.

'And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.' Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.'

a. I will set My face against that person

who eats blood: This was a strict command, but the reason was simple: **For the life of the flesh is in the blood.** The idea was that all life belonged to God, and since blood is an emblem of life, it specially belonged to God.

b. And I have given it to you upon the

altar to make atonement for your souls: Additionally, blood was the means by which atonement was made - therefore, to eat blood was to profane it.

i. Of course, many pagan rituals celebrated the drinking of blood, and God also wanted

a separation from these pagan practices.

ii. Thus, as a matter of practice, all animals that were butchered in Israel were drained

of blood as much as possible. Not all nations did this. "It appears from history that those nations who lived most on it [blood] were very fierce, savage, and barbarous, such as

the *Scythians*, *Tartars*, *Arabs* of the desert, the *Scandinavians*, [and so forth], some of whom drank the blood of their enemies, making cups of their skulls!" (Clarke)

2. (13-16) How to respect God's command regarding blood.

"Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and

catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; for *it is* the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.' And every person who eats what died *naturally* or what was torn *by beasts*, *whether he is* a native of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean. But if he does not wash *them* or bathe his body, then he shall bear his guilt."

a. **He shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust:** If an animal was killed in a hunt and could not be properly bled as in a regular butchering, then the blood was to be poured out on the ground and covered with dust.

i. We may erroneously think this would profane the blood - allowing it to drip on the ground and covering it with dirt. When we think like that, we make the same mistake Uzzah made in 2Sa. 6:6 - thinking that somehow, the ground is less profane than we are.

ii. Instead, pouring out the blood on the

ground like this *honored* the blood of the animal, and was also hygienic. "The life had thus returned to the ground from which it had come, and the hunters and others who chanced to be in the vicinity were protected from the possibility of communicable disease or infection." (Harrison)

iii. This respect for blood of animals should make us consider how we regard the blood

of Jesus. If, under the Old Covenant, the blood of animals was to be respected, what of the precious blood of Jesus which makes a New Covenant? *Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a*

common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? (Heb. 10:29)

b. Every person who eats what died

naturally or what was torn by beasts: If one came upon an animal that had died

naturally (or was something like modern road

kill), one could eat it, because good meat

shouldn't go to waste. But the person who ate was regarded as ceremonially unclean, needing washing.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** "Speak to Aaron, his sons, and all the

Israelites, and tell them: 'This is the word that the LORD has

commanded: **3** "Blood guilt will be accounted to any man

from the house of Israel who slaughters an ox or a lamb or a goat inside the camp or outside the camp, **4** but has not

brought it to the entrance of the Meeting Tent to present it

as an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the

LORD. He has shed blood, so that man will be cut off from

the midst of his people. **5** This is so that the Israelites will

bring their sacrifices that they are sacrificing in the open

field to the LORD at the entrance of the Meeting Tent to the priest and sacrifice them there as peace offering sacrifices to the LORD. **6** The priest is to splash the blood on the altar of the LORD at the entrance of the Meeting Tent, and offer the fat up in smoke for a soothing aroma to the LORD. **7** So they must no longer offer their sacrifices to the goat demons, acting like prostitutes by going after them. This is to be a perpetual statute for them throughout their generations.

8 “You are to say to them: ‘Any man from the house of Israel or from the foreigners who reside in their midst, who offers a burnt offering or a sacrifice **9** but does not bring it to the entrance of the Meeting Tent to offer it to the LORD – that person will be cut off from his people.

10 ““Any man from the house of Israel or from the foreigners who reside in their midst who eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats the blood, and I will cut him off from the midst of his people, **11** for the life of every living thing is in the blood. So I myself have assigned it to you on the altar to make atonement for your lives, for the blood makes atonement by means of the life. **12** Therefore, I have said to the Israelites: No person among you is to eat blood, and no resident foreigner who lives among you is to eat blood.

13 ““Any man from the Israelites or from the foreigners who reside in their midst who hunts a wild animal or a bird that may be eaten must pour out its blood and cover it with soil, **14** for the life of all flesh is its blood. So I have said to the Israelites: You must not eat the blood of any living thing because the life of every living thing is its blood – all who eat it will be cut off.

15 ““Any person who eats an animal that has died of natural causes or an animal torn by beasts, whether a native citizen or a foreigner, must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean until evening; then he becomes clean. **16** But if he does not wash his clothes and does not bathe his body, he will bear his punishment for iniquity.”

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 18:1-30

Leviticus 18 - Laws of Sexual Morality

A. Commands against incest.

1. (1-5) Introduction to the commands regarding sexual conduct.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'I am the LORD your God. According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances. You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I *am* the LORD your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the LORD.'"

a. **I am the LORD your God. According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do:** Before God gave a single command in this area, He first established a foundation for the whole matter. He declared this principle: "You belong to Me, you shall not do as the world does."

i. "The Persians, for example, encouraged marital unions with mothers, daughters and sisters, on the ground that such relationships had special merit in the eyes of the gods." (Harrison)

ii. Sadly, the Christians today often take their standard of sexual conduct from the world, and not from God and His Word.

Clearly, Christians *should* be different from the world in their sexual morality, and they should follow a Biblical standard of sexual

morality. In the early church, one argument for the truth of Christianity offered by

Christians was "You can know it's true by looking at our lives." Today, the Christian world says, "Don't look at me, look at Jesus."

b. If a man does, he shall live by them: Obedience to God's standard of sexual conduct is essential for life, and never more is this true than in our day of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

i. In 1993, a Ventura man was convicted for assault for knowingly spreading AIDS through sex. His unnamed partner, who pressed charges against Crother, has AIDS herself. She said in an interview: "This is not an assault. It is murder. . . . All I wanted is someone to love me, and now I'm going to die for that. I don't think I should have to die for that." If he and she would have obeyed God's word, he and she would not have had to die from AIDS.

ii. Though the rates of heterosexual transmission of AIDS in America are statistically small, other diseases are not.

According to statistics in the 1990's:

- The rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are highest among people between 15 and 25.
- Over 12 million people are infected with STDs every year.
- Teen-age girls have the highest rates for gonorrhea in the nation and teen-age boys are second.
- 10% of sexually active teen-age girls have had gonorrhea. One in four sexually active teens will become infected with an STD.
- If you have an STD, your chances of getting AIDS from an infected partner increases 100 times.

2. (6-9) Incest among immediate family prohibited.

None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I *am* the LORD. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover.

She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it *is* your father's nakedness. The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, *whether* born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover.

a. **To uncover his nakedness:** This phrase (used 17 times in this chapter) is an euphemism for sexual relations. It has less to do with nudity (especially casual nudity) than with sex.

However, the term **uncover nakedness** is broad enough to include the idea of

inappropriate activity short of actual sexual intercourse. It would also include molestation and inappropriate fondling.

b. **The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not**

uncover: In these verses, sex between parents and children, parents and step-children, and between siblings (by birth or marriage) is condemned.

i. There was a time when such prohibitions seemed unnecessary, even gross. But in our rapidly degenerate society it becomes more and more necessary to simply say that sex between people in these relationships is wrong - and must be stopped immediately, and completely repented of by anyone guilty of such sin.

ii. Significantly, sex among people in these relationships is condemned even if they are adults. These are not merely commands

against child-adult sexual relationships. For example, it is sin for a man to have sex with his step-mother, even if they are both adults; or it is wrong for a man to have sex with his adopted sister, even if they are consenting adults.

iii. There was *both* a moral and genetic reason for these commands. "Surveys in different parts of the world where inbreeding occurs have shown that it is accompanied by an increase in congenital malformations and perinatal mortality, for which recessive genes and environmental factors respectively would be responsible." (Harrison)

iv. "In those instances where the parents are siblings, or where the relationship is one between parent and child, the resultant offspring incur approximately at 30% risk of retardation or some other serious defect." (Harrison)

v. These commands would naturally prohibit the marriage between the parties mentioned, such as marriage between brother and sister or mother and son. Our legal system has the responsibility to continue to define marriage based on these commands - and if marriage will not be between an unrelated man and woman, who is to say that marriage could not be between a brother and sister?

vi. "Marriage as a social institution is regarded throughout Scripture as the cornerstone of all other structures, and hence its purity and integrity must be protected at all times." (Harrison)

c. The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it is your father's nakedness: The idea is that

a husband or wife's nakedness *belongs* to their spouse, and to no one else. The legal spouse is the one with whom God intends them to be *naked and unashamed*, in the Gen. 2:25 sense of restoring some of what the curse has taken away.

3. (10-18) Other applications of the command against incest.

The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs *is* your own nakedness.

The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father; she *is* your sister; you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she *is* near of kin to your father. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she *is* near of kin to your mother. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she *is* your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she *is* your son's wife; you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it *is* your brother's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They *are* near of kin to her. It *is* wickedness. Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive.

a. The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their

nakedness you shall not uncover: In these verses, God condemns sexual relations between many different family relationships: · Grandparents and grandchildren (by blood or by marriage)

- Uncles, aunts, and nieces, nephews
- Parents and the spouses of their children
- Siblings and the spouses of their other siblings

- The children of a spouse
- The sibling of a spouse

b. **It is your brother's nakedness:** The principle is related again. The nakedness of an individual *belongs* to their spouse and no one else, and it is a violation of God's law to *give* that nakedness to anyone else, or for anyone else to *take* it.

B. Other laws regarding sexual morality.

1. (19) Prohibition of violating a woman's time of customary impurity.

Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as long as she is in her *customary* impurity.

a. **In her customary impurity:** This command is an echo of Lev. 15:19, where the penalty for breaking this observance of ceremonial cleanliness was described (the penalty was to perform a ritual washing).

2. (20) Command against adultery.

Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, to defile yourself with her.

a. **You shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife:** This is an echo of the seventh commandment (Exo. 20:14). We see the *act itself* is condemned and there is no justification allowed under the ways people often seek to justify adultery. To say, "My partner doesn't understand me" or "we are in love" or "God led us to be with each other" justifies nothing.

i. Michael English, who lost his recording contract and marriage over adultery with another Christian music singer, says of his adultery and its aftermath: "Maybe God allowed this to happen to make me see I needed some freedom." This is a wrong and harmful way to see the sin of adultery.

b. **To defile yourself with her:** Many people who are tempted to adultery do not consider how the sin will **defile**

themselves. The *might* think about how their sin obviously affects their spouse, children, and other family members. But adultery also defiles the individual committing the sin, showing them to be an *unfaithful* and *uncontrolled* person.

i. Dalma Heyn, in her book, *The Erotic*

Silence of the American Wife asserted that more women than ever were rejecting the role of the self-sacrificing "perfect wife" and are finding pleasure and escape through adultery. But most women who were unfaithful said that after the thrill was gone, their lives were left a shambles. Cathy, an

Orange County woman who committed adultery with one of her husband's business associates, said: "My advice to married women is: Don't fool around. Having an affair and living two lives may be fun at first.

But you will pay for it later. Too many people get hurt." Another woman, Laura, who had an 11-year adulterous relationship searching for excitement and passion, said: "An affair does not enhance your marriage; it detracts from it. It was an escape. A way for me to avoid facing things in my relationship with my husband."

ii. From a Los Angeles Times article

headlined *Parents' Affairs Can Devastate*

Kids: "When parents go outside the marital vows, they are taking a shotgun and firing into a crowd. That shot will hurt a spouse,

sure, but most likely, it will also take out some people who were never intended to get hit." In the same article, a counselor says: "I find that with adolescents, the trauma of infidelity is overwhelming . .

. during adolescence, when sexuality is super-charged, the parents' inability to maintain

sexual control can become very frightening."

3. (21) Command against Molech worship.

And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through *the fire* to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD.

a. **You shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to**

Molech: The pagan god (or, *demon*, more accurately) **Molech** was worshipped by heating a metal statue representing the god until it was red hot, then by placing a living infant on the outstretched hands of the statue, while beating drums drowned out the screams of the child until it burned to death.

b. **Nor shall you profane the name of your**

God: It is obvious God would condemn such an abomination. But this command is here in this context of sexual sins because often, Molech worship was a method of infanticide to eliminate illegitimate children, eliminating the fruit of the immoral sexual conduct God has commanded against.

i. Molech worship can be seen as an ancient version of birth control by infanticide, as even today many people practice birth control by abortion.

4. (22) Command against homosexual sex.

You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It *is* an abomination.

a. **You shall not lie with a male as with a woman:**

Simply put, God calls homosexual sex an abomination, even as He does in Rom. 1:24-32. Additionally, homosexuality was part of the idolatrous perversions which were allowed in Israel at its times of backsliding (1Ki. 14:24, 15:12, and 22:46).

i. Homosexual practice truly is an abomination in our present culture. 43% of homosexuals say that they have had 500 or

more sexual partners in their lifetime. Only 1% of homosexuals say they have had four or less sexual partners in their lifetime.

ii. Homosexuals seem to specialize in anonymous sex with no emotional commitment. At one time, London AIDS clinics defined a woman as promiscuous if she'd had more than six partners in her lifetime. They gave up trying to apply a workable definition to male homosexuals when it became clear that they saw almost no homosexual men who had less than six sexual partners a year.

b. **It is an abomination:** This command is commonly objected to on the grounds that one was born - or created - with homosexual

desires. "I was born this way; *God* made me a homosexual. It *is* my nature to be homosexual; it would be against my nature to be heterosexual."

i. The problem is that the Bible says we are all *sinners by nature*; not a single person is born without an attraction to sin in some way or another. We should not say that God

made the homosexual; we could say that Adam did, when he passed on the effects of his rebellion to the entire human race.

ii. Our inborn attraction to sin justifies nothing. The one who practices homosexuality can no more justify himself by saying "I was born this way" than can the person who hates homosexuals justify their ungodly hatred by saying "I was born this way."

iii. Many justify homosexual practice on the basis of *love*. They might say, "How can it be wrong to *love* someone of my own sex?

How can love be wrong?" Yet if someone

loves their children, it does not justify sexual conduct with them. The issue isn't love; the issue is of sexual conduct. Of course, the Bible in no way condemns love between people of the same sex, but it does say that *sexual conduct* between those people is sin.

5. (23) Command against bestiality - sexual relations with animals.

Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It *is* perversion.

a. **Nor shall you mate with any animal:** This passage prohibits what may seem obviously perverted. Yet we can say that apart from the Bible, there is no moral difference between

bestiality and homosexuality, or no moral difference between bestiality and pedophilia.

i. "In contrast, the gods of Ugarit, by their example, led their devotees in this sin." (Harris)

b. **It is perversion:** Yet perversions of all kinds are more and more accepted today. In the 1990s on a college campus, a group mocked the campus sponsored GLAD (Gay and Lesbian

Awareness Days) week by promoting their own cause: BAD (Bestiality Awareness Days).

Though in bad taste, they made a valid point: On what basis do we say that one is wrong and unnatural and another is not? If there is no God, then everything is permissible; it is all a matter of opinion and preference and nothing else. But the truth is that God *does* have standards we will be held accountable to.

6. (24-30) Summation: The urgency to obey God's command for sexual morality.

Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before

you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that *were* before you. For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. **Do not defile yourselves:** Our modern culture often refuses to see any aspect of sexual conduct as *defiling*. The only measure is immediate pleasure, not right or wrong. But sexual sin *does* **defile** us and it *does* harm us.

God's laws are given for our best, not in an attempt to merely test us or boss us around.

i. Statistically speaking, married couples live longer, get more enjoyment out of sex, have more sex, and are happier than those who are not married - obviously, trends that show God's way is the best way!

b. **For the land is defiled:** One of the reasons God brought Israel to defeat and displace the Canaanites was as judgment against their sexual perversions. In nations that sanction and promote similar sins today, we should expect that the judgment of God would eventually come and the land will **vomit** out its inhabitants.

c. **The persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people:** God commanded that in Israel, there should be a

strong sense of social disapproval - amounting to exile - towards those who broke these laws of sexual morality.

i. It isn't that these things were never done in Israel; it is simply that it was clear that society said those things were wrong and should never be allowed. More and more, modern culture refuses to call almost any kind of sexual conduct sin.

© 2004 David Guzik - *No distribution beyond personal use without permission* **2** “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘I am the LORD

your God! **3** You must not do as they do in the land of Egypt where you have been living, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan into which I am about to bring you; you must not walk in their statutes. **4** You must observe my regulations and you must be sure to walk in my statutes. I am the LORD your God. **5** So you must keep my statutes and my regulations; anyone who does so will live by keeping them. I am the LORD.

6 “‘No man is to approach any close relative to have sexual intercourse with her. I am the LORD. **7** You must not expose your father’s nakedness by having sexual intercourse with your mother. She is your mother; you must not have intercourse with her. **8** You must not have sexual intercourse with your father’s wife; she is your father’s nakedness. **9** You must not have sexual intercourse with your sister, whether she is your father’s daughter or your mother’s daughter, whether she is born in the same household or born outside it; you must not have sexual intercourse with either of them.

10 You must not expose the nakedness of your son’s daughter or your daughter’s daughter by having sexual intercourse with them, because they are your own nakedness. **11** You must not have sexual intercourse with the daughter of your father’s wife born of your father; she is your sister. You must not have intercourse with her. **12** You must not have sexual intercourse with your father’s sister; she is your father’s flesh. **13** You must not have sexual

intercourse with your mother's sister, because she is your mother's flesh. **14** You must not expose the nakedness of your father's brother; you must not approach his wife to have sexual intercourse with her. She is your aunt. **15** You must not have sexual intercourse with your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife. You must not have intercourse with her.

16 You must not have sexual intercourse with your brother's wife; she is your brother's nakedness. **17** You must not have sexual intercourse with both a woman and her daughter; you must not take as wife either her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to have intercourse with them. They are closely related to her – it is lewdness.

18 You must not take a woman in marriage and then marry her sister as a rival wife while she is still alive, to have sexual intercourse with her.

19 “You must not approach a woman in her menstrual impurity to have sexual intercourse with her. **20** You must not have sexual intercourse with the wife of your fellow citizen to become unclean with her. **21** You must not give any of your children as an offering to Molech, so that you do not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD! **22**

You must not have sexual intercourse with a male as one has sexual intercourse with a woman; it is a detestable act. **23** You must not have sexual intercourse with any animal to become defiled with it, and a woman must not stand before an animal to have sexual intercourse with it; it is a perversion.

24 “Do not defile yourselves with any of these things, for the nations which I am about to drive out before you have been defiled with all these things. **25** Therefore the land has become unclean and I have brought the punishment for its iniquity upon it, so that the land has vomited out its inhabitants. **26** You yourselves must obey my statutes and my regulations and must not do any of these abominations, both the native citizen and the resident foreigner in your

midst, **27** for the people who were in the land before you have done all these abominations, and the land has become unclean. **28** So do not make the land vomit you out because you defile it just as it has vomited out the nations that were before you. **29**

For if anyone does any of these abominations, the persons who do them will be cut off from the midst of their people.

30 You must obey my charge to not practice any of the abominable statutes that have been done before you, so that you do not defile yourselves by them. I am the LORD your God.'"

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 19:1-37

Leviticus 19 - Many Various Laws

A. Laws regarding matters already covered.

1. (1-2) The general call to holiness.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God *am* holy.'"

a. **You shall be holy:** The idea behind the word **holy** is "separate." As it is applied to God, it describes God's *apartness*. It means that God is different than man and from all other beings in the greatness and majesty of His attributes.

He has a righteousness unlike any other; a justice unlike any other; a purity unlike any other - and love, grace, and mercy unlike any other.

i. Part of this idea is that God is not merely a *super-man*; His being and character are divine, not human.

b. **Be holy, for I the LORD your God am**

holy: God is separate from man and from all creation. Yet because humans are made in the image of God, they can follow in His steps and also **be holy**.

i. Being holy means being like God, separating ourselves unto Him and His truth

- and naturally, separating ourselves from those things that are not like Him and not according to His truth.

3. (3) The law to respect parents.

Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. **Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father:** Honor for parents is an essential building block for the stability and health of all society. If the younger generations are constantly at war with older generations, the foundations of society will be destroyed.

b. **And keep My Sabbaths:** Reverence for parents is linked to reverence for the LORD.

Submitting to parental authority is a step to submitting to Divine authority.

i. "Reverencing parents is an act of piety towards God, since the parents are substitutes for the heavenly Father as far as their children are concerned." (Harrison) 4. (4) The law against idolatry.

Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves molded gods: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. **Do not turn to idols:** The word for **idols** literally means *nothings*. Idols represent gods that are not real and do not really exist.

b. **Nor make for yourselves molded gods:** Israel had significant trouble with the worship of idols until the Babylonian captivity (some 800 years from the time of Leviticus). The attraction was not so much to the **molded gods** themselves, than as to what they represented -

financial success, pleasure, and self-worship.

i. After the Babylonian captivity, Israel was cured of gross idolatry of **molded gods** and began a more insidious form of idolatry -

idolatry of the nation itself, idolatry of the temple and its ceremonies, and an idolatry of tradition.

5. (5-8) Laws regarding offerings.

And if you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, you shall offer it of your own free will.

It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire. And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it *is* an abomination.

It shall not be accepted. Therefore *everyone* who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed *offering* of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

a. If you offer a sacrifice of a peace

offering: A **peace offering** (signifying the enjoyment of peace with God and fellowship) was always to be made by one's **own free will**.

God did not want coerced fellowship from the people of Israel.

b. It shall be eaten the same day you offer it: Nor did God want *stale* fellowship with the people of Israel. The meat of a peace offering was considered no good after two days.

B. Other laws.

1. (9-10) Providing for the poor by leaving fields incompletely harvested.

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather *every* grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. You shall not wholly reap the corners of your field:

This was one of the public assistance programs in Israel. Farmers were not to completely harvest their fields, so the

poor and needy could come and glean the remains for themselves.

i. This is exactly what Ruth was doing when Boaz noticed her (Rth. 2:2-3).

b. **You shall leave them for the poor and**

the stranger: This was a wonderful way to help the poor. It commanded the farmers to have a generous heart, and the poor to be

active and to work for their food. It made a way for the poor to provide for their own needs with dignity.

2. (11-13) Honest dealing.

You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. And you shall not swear by My name

falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD. You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning.

3. (14) Basic human compassion commanded.

You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I *am* the LORD.

a. **You shall not curse the deaf:** God

commanded Israel to not mistreat the handicapped. Cursing the deaf is cruel because they can't hear your curse, though others can.

To **put a stumbling block before the blind**

is just mean.

i. An accurate and revealing measure of our humanity is how we treat the weak and unfortunate.

b. **Nor put a stumbling block before the**

blind: This tells us the kind of people the Israelites were. They had to be specifically commanded to observe such laws of

fundamental kindness. This shows what Israel was, and what we are in the flesh.

4. (15-16) Laws regarding justice and truthfulness.

You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go about *as* a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I *am* the LORD.

a. **You shall do no injustice in judgment:** These were primarily instructions to judges and magistrates, giving them principles for making legal decisions. However, they also are relevant to everyday relations with those around us.

i. Jesus reminded us what this principle is all about: We should only judge others with the standard we are willing to be judged by because God will apply that same standard to us (Mat. 7:1-2).

b. **You shall not go about as a talebearer**

among your people: A **talebearer** is essentially a gossip, someone who cannot mind their own business (1Th. 4:11), and who delights in discussing the lives of others and spreading stories.

i. Adam Clarke on the **talebearer**: "A more despicable character exists not: such a person is a pest to society, and should be exiled from the habitations of men."

5. (17-18) The command to love one's neighbor.

You shall not hate your brother in your heart.

You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the LORD.

a. **You shall not hate your brother in your heart:** Love for one's brother is commanded, not only in action but also in **heart**. Yet if it is not present in the heart, then it should be in one's actions and the heart will follow. But we should not be content to treat others well and have a heart of

hatred towards them; God desires to change our hearts to love them.

b. **You shall surely rebuke:** Love will rebuke another when it is necessary. We all have blindspots where we think everything is fine, but it is evident to others just how much we are in the flesh.

c. **You shall not take vengeance:** Vengeance belongs to God (Rom. 12:19) and there is a sense in which we can hold back God's work of vengeance upon others by seeking it ourselves.

i. Of course, this principle applies to interpersonal relationships, and not to the rightful functions of government in keeping the law. Criminals cannot be let free because vengeance belongs to God. God exercises His vengeance through the rightful use of government authority (Rom. 13:1-7). It is appropriate to both *personally* forgive the criminal, *and* testify against them in court.

d. **Nor bear a grudge:** This is very difficult for many people. It is easy to cherish a grudge against another, especially when it is deserved; but too much damage is done to the one holding the grudge.

e. **You shall love your neighbor as yourself:** Some are surprised to see this generous command in what they believe to be the harsh Old Testament; but even the Old Covenant clearly commands us to love others.

i. Unfortunately, many ancient Jews had a narrow definition of who their **neighbor** was and only considered their friends and countrymen their neighbors. Jesus commanded us to *love your enemies* (Luk. 6:27), and showed our neighbor was the one in need, even if a traditional enemy

(Luk. 10:25-37).

ii. The command to love your neighbor **as yourself** is simple yet commonly misunderstood. This doesn't mean that we must love ourselves before we can love anyone else; it means that in the same way we take care of ourselves and our concerned about our own interests, we should take care and have concern for the interests of others.

iii. We love ourselves just fine: *For no one ever hated his own flesh, nourishes and cherishes it* (Eph. 5:29). Paul warned that in the last days, *men will be lovers of themselves* (2Ti. 3:2) - and not in a positive sense! In fact, our misery when things are going bad shows we love ourselves; we rejoice in the misery of those we hate! Our challenge is to show others the same love we show ourselves.

6. (19) Laws of purity in response to pagan practices.

'You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

a. **You shall not sow your field with mixed seed:** The mixing of these things - different species of livestock, seeds, and fabrics - was usually seen by pagans to be a source of magical power. God wanted Israel to have no association with these pagan customs.

b. **Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you:** Since those pagan customs are no longer an issue in our day, we shouldn't worry about mixing wool and linen - or other fabrics - in our day. This law is a good example of something that is no

longer binding upon Christians today, because the pagan custom the law guarded against is no longer practiced.

i. However, in our modern age there are *important distinctions* that are blurred and Christians must not participate in. The present day blurring of distinctions between genders should be resisted by Christians.

7. (20-22) The penalty for unlawful intercourse with a concubine.

Whoever lies carnally with a woman who *is* betrothed to a man as a concubine, and who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom, for this there shall be scourging; *but* they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, a ram as a trespass offering. The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he has committed. And the sin which he has committed shall be forgiven him.

a. **Whoever lies carnally with a woman**

who is betrothed to a man as a concubine: This deals with a woman who was a **concubine** in the sense she was a slave girl, who was eligible to be married.

b. **And the sin which he has committed**

shall be forgiven him: This is the situation described: A slave girl is engaged to marry a free man, and then a different man has sex with her. Normally, the penalty was death; but because the woman was a slave, and was presumed to be not free to resist (or guarded by a father), the penalty was not death. Yet, she was not marriable to her fiancée, so he must be reimbursed (the punishment mentioned). Then the moral guilt would be settled by sacrifice, and presumably, the man who had sex with her would be obliged to marry her.

8. (23-25) Regarding the fruit in the land of Canaan.

When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. *It* shall not be eaten.

But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD. And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. **When you come into the land:** God reminded Israel of their ultimate goal - the promised land, the land of Canaan - and told them not to eat of the fruit of the trees they plant there for three years. Then the fruit of the fourth year belonged to the LORD, and the fruit of the fifth year could be eaten.

b. **That it may yield to you its increase:** God knew that not harvesting the fruit for this period would be beneficial for both the trees and the surrounding ecology, and result in ultimately more productive fruit trees.

9. (26-31) Laws to insure separation from pagan practices.

You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying. You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard.

You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I *am* the LORD. Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness. You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the LORD. Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. **You shall not eat anything with the blood:** Eating blood was a practice in many pagan cultic ceremonies, as was **divination** and **soothsaying**. Therefore both are directly forbidden.

i. Harrison on **soothsaying**: "The prognostication of favourable times for

specific forms of action." This was predicting lucky days or favorable times as an astrologer or others might do.

b. You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard: To do this was to imitate pagan customs of that day; today, Jewish orthodox men are conspicuous by their untrimmed beards and long, curly locks on the sides of their heads.

c. Cuttings in the flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: These were also pagan practices God wanted Israel to separate from. The trimming of the hair, the beard, cutting, and tattoos were all connected with pagan rites of mourning.

i. Part of this message to us today is that what our culture thinks and how they perceive things is important. If some clothing or jewelry or body decoration would associate us with the pagan world, it should not be done. This is a difficult line to draw, because the standards of culture are always changing. Some modern examples of changing standards are hair length and earrings for men.

ii. In Paul's day, in the city of Corinth, only prostitutes went around without a head covering - so it was right for the Christian women of Corinth to wear veils, though not required to by the letter of the law (1Co. 11:5-6).

d. Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot: To prostitute your daughter in this context probably means to give her as a ritual prostitute at a pagan temple; this was of course forbidden, though in the eyes of the pagan culture, it was a religious thing to do.

e. **Mediums and familiar spirits:** These were ways the pagans sought to contact the dead or other spirits; this was a doorway into the occult, and strictly forbidden - those who **seek after** these things are **defiled** - "made dirty" by them.

i. "In some Near Eastern societies such mediums would dig a small hole in the earth to symbolize a grave, and then put offerings in it to attract the attention of the person whom the medium desired to contact." (Harrison)

ii. The word for **familiar spirits** comes from a root meaning "to know"; "perhaps referring to the occultic information which the practitioner of necromancy purported to have." (Harrison)

iii. "Not only are all real dealers with familiar spirits, or necromantic or magical superstitions, are here forbidden, but also all *pretenders* to the knowledge of futurity, fortune-tellers, astrologers, and so forth." (Clarke)

10. (32-37) Further laws of kindness and justice.

You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I *am* the LORD. And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God. You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume. You shall have honest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them: I *am* the LORD.

a. **You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man . . .**

if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him: These are all expositions on the principle of *you shall love your neighbor as yourself* (Lev. 19:18); if we were the old man, or the stranger, or the consumer, we would want fair and kind treatment.

b. **I am the LORD:** 15 times in this chapter, God declared that He is the LORD - and the one with the right to tell us what to do. This is something that God expected ancient Israel to respect, and expects His modern day followers to also respect.

i. The relationship between a lord and his people meant that the people had obligations to their lord, but the lord also had obligations toward his people. The lord was obligated to care for his servants, and our LORD God certainly cares for His people.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** “Speak to the whole congregation of the Israelites and tell them, ‘You must be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy. **3** Each of you must respect his mother and his father, and you must keep my Sabbaths. I am the LORD your God. **4** Do not turn to idols, and you must not make for yourselves gods of cast metal. I am the LORD your God. **5** “‘When you sacrifice a peace offering sacrifice to the LORD, you must sacrifice it so that it is accepted for you. **6** It must be eaten on the day of your sacrifice and on the following day, but what is left over until the third day must be burned up. **7** If, however, it is eaten on the third day, it is spoiled, it will not be accepted, **8** and the one who eats it will bear his punishment for iniquity because he has profaned what is holy to the LORD. That person will be cut off from his people.

9 “‘When you gather in the harvest of your land, you must not completely harvest the corner of your field, and you must not gather up the gleanings of your harvest. **10**

You must not pick your vineyard bare, and you must not gather up the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You must leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.

11 “You must not steal, you must not tell lies, and you must not deal falsely with your fellow citizen. **12** You must not swear falsely in my name, so that you do not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD. **13** You must not oppress your neighbor or commit robbery against him. You must not withhold the wages of the hired laborer overnight until morning. **14** You must not curse a deaf person or put a stumbling block in front of a blind person. You must fear your God; I am the LORD.

15 “You must not deal unjustly in judgment: you must neither show partiality to the poor nor honor the rich. You must judge your fellow citizen fairly. **16** You must not go about as a slanderer among your people. You must not stand idly by when your neighbor’s life is at stake. I am the LORD. **17** You must not hate your brother in your heart. You must surely reprove your fellow citizen so that you do not incur sin on account of him. **18** You must not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the children of your people, but you must love your neighbor as yourself.

I am the LORD. **19** You must keep my statutes. You must not allow two different kinds of your animals to breed, you must not sow your field with two different kinds of seed, and you must not wear a garment made of two different kinds of fabric.

20 “When a man has sexual intercourse with a woman, although she is a slave woman designated for another man and she has not yet been ransomed, or freedom has not been granted to her, there will be an obligation to pay compensation. They must not be put to death, because she was not free. **21** He must bring his guilt offering to the LORD at the entrance of the Meeting Tent, a guilt offering ram, **22** and the priest is to make atonement for him with the ram of

the guilt offering before the LORD for his sin that he has committed, and he will be forgiven of his sin that he has committed.

23 “When you enter the land and plant any fruit tree, you must consider its fruit to be forbidden. Three years it will be forbidden to you; it must not be eaten. **24** In the fourth year all its fruit will be holy, praise offerings to the LORD. **25** Then in the fifth year you may eat its fruit to add its produce to your harvest. I am the LORD your God.

26 “You must not eat anything with the blood still in it. You must not practice either divination or soothsaying. **27** You must not round off the corners of the hair on your head or ruin the corners of your beard. **28** You must not slash your body for a dead person or incise a tattoo on yourself. I am the LORD. **29** Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, so that the land does not practice prostitution and become full of lewdness.

30 “You must keep my Sabbaths and fear my sanctuary. I am the LORD. **31** Do not turn to the spirits of the dead and do not seek familiar spirits to become unclean by them. I am the LORD your God. **32** You must stand up in the presence of the aged, honor the presence of an elder, and fear your God. I am the LORD. **33** When a foreigner resides with you in your land, you must not oppress him.

34 The foreigner who resides with you must be to you like a native citizen among you; so you must love him as yourself, because you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.

I am the LORD your God. **35** You must not do injustice in the regulation of measures, whether of length, weight, or volume. **36** You must have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt. **37** You must be sure to obey all my statutes and regulations. I am the LORD.”

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 20:1-27

Leviticus 20 - Punishments for Laws Already

Given

A. The penalty for sins of idolatry.

1. (1-5) Molech worship.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: 'Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name. And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.'"

a. **Who gives any of his descendants to**

Molech, he shall surely be put to death: The worship of the horrific idol Molech was mentioned in Lev. 18:21. Molech was

worshipped by heating a metal statue

representing the god until it was red hot, then by placing a living infant on the outstretched hands of the statue, while beating drums drowned out the screams of the child until it burned to death.

b. **I will set My face against that man and against his family:** The penalty for Molech worship was death and if the sentence was not carried out by Israel, God declared He would **set My face against that man and against his family**. God will prosecute if the legal system of Israel failed to.

i. Sadly, even a man as great as Solomon at

least sanctioned the worship of Molech and built a temple to this idol (1Ki. 11:7). King Ahaz of Judah gave his own son to Molech (2Ki. 16:3). One of the great crimes of the northern tribes of Israel was their worship of Molech, leading to the Assyrian captivity (2Ki. 17:17). King Manasseh of Judah gave his son to Molech (2Ki. 21:6). Up to the days of King Josiah of Judah, Molech worship continued, because he destroyed a place of worship to that idol (2Ki. 23:10).

2. (6-8) The penalty for involvement with the occult.

And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I *am* the LORD your God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I *am* the LORD who sanctifies you.

a. **I will set My face against that person**

and cut them off from his people: In this specific passage, God gave nothing for Israel to do regarding the penalty. He simply said that *He* would execute the penalty. Involvement in such occultic practices invariably separates someone from God.

i. This was the driving force behind the Ephesian church's dramatic renunciation of magical and occultic materials (Act. 19:17-20). Having seen the reality of spiritual warfare, they wanted to draw close to the LORD and remove anything that might hinder that drawing close.

ii. 1Jo. 4:2 makes it clear there are spirits who are not from God; such occultic, Jesus-denying spirits must be rejected completely.

b. **Sanctify yourselves . . . I am the LORD**

who sanctifies you: These are two important aspects of our walk with God. God will not force you to be separate to Him. He does the work, but He does it through our own cooperating efforts and yielded will.

B. The penalties for sins of immorality.

1. (9) The penalty for the cursing of a parent.

For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood *shall be* upon him.

a. **Everyone who curses his father or his**

mother: Virtually all commentators agree this is not the outburst of a small child - or even an adolescent - against their parent, but the settled heart of an adult child against their parent. Such inter-generational warfare was not to be tolerated, and punishable by death.

b. **Curses his father or his mother:** This wasn't merely saying something bad about or to one's parents; it was likely the calling down of a death-curse on them.

i. "Elaborate curses, many of which appear to have the nature of magical spells, were current in the ancient Near East, and amongst superstitious people often worked with devastating effect since in the eastern mind the curse carried with itself its own power of execution." (Harrison)

c. **Shall surely be put to death:** Even

considering that this law applied to an adult child who threatened their parent, this was still a severe law. Yet as it was practiced in ancient Israel, it had a built-in protection for the rights of the child, according to Deu. 21:18-21. This passage states that the parent did not have the right to carry out this punishment, but they had to bring the accused child before the elders and judges of the city. This meant that the parent -

against all contemporary custom - did not have the absolute power of life and death over their children. As a practical

matter, the judges of Israel rarely if ever administered the death penalty in such cases, yet the child was held accountable.

2. (10) The penalty for adultery.

The man who commits adultery with *another* man's wife, *he* who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.

a. **The adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death:** God commanded the death penalty for adultery in ancient Israel. As with previous laws and their penalties, this was because of the exceedingly great social consequences of this sin. God commanded the ultimate penalty to discourage it.

b. **Shall surely be put to death:** As a practical matter, this death penalty was rarely carried out, as is the case in most of these situation where capital punishment is

commanded. This is because any capital crime required two or three witnesses, and the witnesses had to be so sure of what they saw that they were willing to "cast the first stone" - that is, initiate the execution (Deu. 17:6-7).

i. So, particularly in a case of adultery (or other sexual sins) there would rarely be two eyewitnesses willing to initiate the execution

- and so capital punishment would not be carried out.

ii. This also helps us to understand what Jesus was doing when confronting the crowd who brought to Him the woman taken in adultery. By their presence and words, they claimed to have caught the woman in the act - but why then did they not bring the guilty man as well? And who was willing to cast the first stone - that is, initiate the execution? (Joh. 8:1-12)

c. **Shall surely be put to death:** If the death penalty was carried out so rarely in ancient Israel (especially for these crimes), what good was it? It communicated loud and clear an *ideal* that Israel was to live up to, and it made people regard their sin much more seriously. Today, we have done away with this ideal, and people don't care about such sins.

i. In ancient Israel, there was no stronger way to say simply: *Adultery is wrong, cursing your parents is wrong, incest is wrong* - and even if you "get away with it," it is wrong, God regards it as wrong, and society regards it as wrong.

3. (11-12) The penalty for sins of incest.

The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them. If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death.

They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

4. (13) The penalty for homosexuality.

If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

a. **If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put**

to death: Though God here commanded the death penalty for homosexual practice (under the guidelines of evidence in a capital case as described in Deu. 17:6-7), we should note this was not a more severe punishment than what was commanded for adultery or incest.

Homosexuality is sin, but sin in the same sense other sexual sins are.

5. (14) The penalty for marrying both a woman and her mother.

If a man marries a woman and her mother, it *is* wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you.

a. **They shall be burned with fire:** Adam Clarke had an interesting approach to the phrase **shall be burned with fire**, though not likely accurate: "It is very likely that the crime mentioned in this verse was not punished by *burning alive*, but by some kind of *branding*, by which they were ever after rendered infamous. .

. . *Branding* with a hot iron would certainly accomplish every desirable end both for punishment and prevention."

6. (15-16) The penalty for bestiality.

If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *is* upon them.

7. (17-21) The penalty for other sexual sins.

If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it *is* a wicked thing.

And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness.

He shall bear his guilt. If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt. If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. If a man takes his brother's wife, it *is* an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

a. **They shall be cut off in the sight of their people:**

The penalty for these sins does was not death (as in the previously mentioned sexual sins), but rather to be **cut off** - that is, exiled or sanctioned within Israel until the sin was atoned for or cleansed through a ceremonial cleansing.

b. **They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless:**

Other aspects of the penalties here belong to God alone - **they shall be childless** is a penalty only God can apply.

8. (22-26) Summation: Why God called Israel to such holiness.

You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out. And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them. But I have said to you, "You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey." I *am* the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples. You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as

unclean. And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

a. **You shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you:** The Canaanites who presently lived in the Promised Land were deeply involved in these

sins, and because of that, God would use Israel to judge them and drive them out.

b. **That the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out:** God

pleaded with Israel to obey Him, that the same fate would not befall Israel. Unfortunately, eventually it did - and the land did cast out Israel, resulting in the exile both for the northern nation of Israel and the southern nation of Judah.

c. **That you should be Mine:** These laws were not only given so that Israel could possess the land; they were also so God could possess Israel - so they would be **holy to Me, for I the LORD and holy . . . that you should be Mine.**

i. Sometimes we think what God mostly wants is our *obedience*; but there is a sense in which we can give God our obedience without giving Him ourselves (such as perhaps the Pharisees did). What God really wants is *us* - and if that is truly given, the obedience will follow.

9. (27) Penalty for being a medium or practitioner of the occult.

A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood *shall be* upon them."

a. **A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death:** If one consulted a medium, they were to be *cut off* (Lev. 20:6); but if some one was the actual practitioner of these occultic arts, they were to be executed under the law of Israel.

b. **Their blood shall be upon them:** This reminds us that it is a much more serious thing to lead others into sin than to sin ourselves -

and so the penalty is greater, even as Jesus said: *But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.* (Mat. 18:6) © 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** "You

are to say to the Israelites, 'Any man from the Israelites or from the foreigners who reside in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death; the people of the land must pelt him with stones. **3** I myself will set my face against that man and cut him off from the midst of his people, because he has given some of his children to Molech and thereby defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name. **4** If, however, the people of the land shut their eyes to that man when he gives some of his children to Molech so that they do not put him to death, **5** I myself will set my face against that man and his clan. I will cut off from the midst of their people both him and all who follow after him in spiritual prostitution, to commit prostitution by worshiping Molech.

6 "'The person who turns to the spirits of the dead and familiar spirits to commit prostitution by going after them, I will set my face against that person and cut him off from the midst of his people.

7 "'You must sanctify yourselves and be holy, because I am the LORD your God. **8** You must be sure to obey my statutes. I am the LORD who sanctifies you.

9 "'If anyone curses his father and mother he must be put to death. He has cursed his father and mother; his blood guilt is on himself. **10** If a man commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, both the adulterer and the adulteress must be put to death. **11** If a man has sexual intercourse with his father's wife, he has exposed his father's nakedness. Both of them must be put to death; their blood guilt is on themselves. **12** If a man has sexual intercourse with his daughter-in-law, both of them must be put to death. They have committed perversion; their blood guilt is on themselves. **13** If a man has sexual intercourse with a male as one has sexual intercourse with a woman, the two of them have committed an abomination. They must be put to death; their blood guilt is on themselves.

14 If a man has sexual intercourse with both a woman and her mother, it is lewdness. Both he and they must be burned to death, so there is no lewdness in your midst. **15**

If a man has sexual intercourse with any animal, he must be put to death, and you must kill the animal. **16** If a woman approaches any animal to have sexual intercourse with it, you must kill the woman, and the animal must be put to death; their blood guilt is on themselves.

17 “If a man has sexual intercourse with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or his mother, so that he sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace. They must be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has exposed his sister’s nakedness; he will bear his punishment for iniquity. **18** If a man has sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her fountain of blood and she has exposed the fountain of her blood, so both of them must be cut off from the midst of their people. **19** You must not expose the nakedness of your mother’s sister and your father’s sister, for such a person has laid bare his own close relative. They must bear their punishment for iniquity. **20** If a man has sexual intercourse with his aunt, he has exposed his uncle’s nakedness; they must bear responsibility for their sin, they will die childless.

21 If a man has sexual intercourse with his brother’s wife, it is indecency. He has exposed his brother’s nakedness; they will be childless.

22 “You must be sure to obey all my statutes and regulations, so that the land to which I am about to bring you to take up residence there does not vomit you out. **23**

You must not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am about to drive out before you, because they have done all these things and I am filled with disgust against them. **24**

So I have said to you: You yourselves will possess their land and I myself will give it to you for a possession, a land

flowing with milk and honey. I am the LORD your God who has set you apart from the other peoples. **25**

Therefore you must distinguish between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean, and you must not make yourselves detestable by means of an animal or bird or anything that creeps on the ground – creatures I have distinguished for you as unclean.

26 You must be holy to me because I, the LORD, am holy, and I have set you apart from the other peoples to be mine.

27 ““A man or woman who has in them a spirit of the dead or a familiar spirit must be put to death. They must pelt them with stones; their blood guilt is on themselves.”

1 The LORD said to Moses: “Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron – say to them, ‘For a dead person no priest is to defile himself among his people, Guzik - Leviticus 21:1-24

Leviticus 21 - Specific Instructions for the

Priests

A. Laws for priests in general.

1. (1-4) Priests are forbidden from touching dead bodies.

And the LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them:

'None shall defile himself for the dead among his people, except for his relatives who are nearest to him: his mother, his father, his son, his

daughter, and his brother; also his virgin sister who is near to him, who has had no husband, for her he may defile himself. *Otherwise* he shall not defile himself, *being* a chief man among his people, to profane himself.'"

a. **Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron:** The priests came from a particular family of the tribe of Levi - the family of Aaron. The priests, because of their special responsibility to

represent God before the people and the people before God, had a special call to holiness and ritualistic purity.

i. The purpose behind these laws was to illustrate the purity and separation from sin that was to characterize the priest; a dead body is a picture of sin's result in this world, especially in the way it rapidly decays.

b. **None shall defile himself for the dead**

among his people: The prohibition regarding dead bodies wasn't just about touching a dead body, but even being in the same room as a

dead body or walking over a grave or touching a tomb.

c. **Except for his relatives who are nearest to him:** A priest could participate in the burial rites for an immediate family member, but for none other.

2. (5) Priests must not imitate the mourning practices of the pagans.

They shall not make any bald *place* on their heads, nor shall they shave the edges of their beards nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

3. (6-9) The marriage practices of priests.

They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God, for they offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire, *and* the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy.

They shall not take a wife *who is* a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband; for *the priest* is holy to his God. Therefore you shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I the LORD, who sanctify you, *am* holy. The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire.

a. **They shall not take a wife who is a**

harlot or a defiled woman: Priests were only to take virgins for wives, again as an illustration of the commitment and purity that was required of priests. A priest - under the Old or New

Covenant - was only to set their affections on that which is pure.

b. **The daughter of any priest:** The daughter of a priest had a special responsibility to be pure as well; though this would be covered under the general laws of Israel, special mention is made of it here to emphasize the point.

B. Requirements regarding the high priest and the selection of priests.

1. (10-15) The responsibility of the high priest.

He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes; nor shall he go near any dead body, nor defile

himself for his father or his mother; nor shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God *is* upon him: I *am* the LORD. And he shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow or a divorced woman or a defiled woman

or a harlot; these he shall not marry; but he shall take a virgin of his own people as wife. Nor shall he profane his posterity among his people, for I the LORD sanctify him.

a. **Shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes:**

These were extreme signs of mourning for the dead. The high priest was not allowed to mourn in this extreme way for any dead person - even his father or mother.

i. The high priest who tried Jesus sinned against this command at the trial of Jesus (Mat. 26:65), in a dramatic display of horror that Jesus claimed to be God.

b. **And he shall take a wife in her virginity:** The high priest also had to take special care in selecting his wife; not just any woman would

do. A woman would have to have a unique purity and a unique calling to be the wife of a high priest.

i. "The mention of a *harlot* is intended to remind the Israelites that cultic prostitution of the Canaanite variety had no place

whatever in the life of the covenant community, since such behaviour would profane God's holy name." (Harrison)

2. (16-24) Ministering priests must be free from physical defects.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron, saying: 'No man of your descendants in *succeeding* generations, who has *any* defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God. For any man who has a defect shall not approach: a man blind or lame, who has a marred *face* or

any *limb* too long, a man who has a broken foot or broken hand, or is a hunchback or a dwarf, or a *man* who has a defect in his eye, or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch. No man of the descendants of

Aaron the priest, who has a defect, shall come near to offer the offerings made by fire to the LORD. He has a defect; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God. He may eat the bread of his God, *both* the most holy and the holy; only he shall not go near the veil or approach the altar, because he has a defect, lest he profane My sanctuaries; for I the LORD sanctify them."

And Moses told *it* to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel.

a. No man of your descendants in succeeding generations, who has any defect, may approach to offer the bread of his God:

This obviously shows God's standard for those who would come before Him in service as priests. The prohibition against those with physical defects was meant to point to the even more obvious need to be free from spiritual defect when coming to God.

b. He may eat the bread of his God: This indicates that those in priestly families could be supported by the priesthood. The barring of physically defective persons as priests was no bar to fellowship with God, only a bar against the public service of God in the tabernacle itself.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 except for his close relative who is near to him: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother, **3** and his virgin sister who is near to him, who has no husband; he may defile himself for her. **4** He must not defile himself as a husband among his people so as to profane himself. **5** Priests must not have a bald spot shaved on their

head, they must not shave the corner of their beard, and they must not cut slashes in their body.

6 “They must be holy to their God, and they must not profane the name of their God, because they are the ones who present the LORD’s gifts, the food of their God.

Therefore they must be holy. **7** They must not take a wife defiled by prostitution, nor are they to take a wife divorced from her husband, for the priest is holy to his God. **8** You must sanctify him because he presents the food of your God. He must be holy to you because I, the LORD who sanctifies you all, am holy. **9** If a daughter of a priest profanes herself by engaging in prostitution, she is profaning her father. She must be burned to death.

10 “The high priest – who is greater than his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil is poured, who has been ordained to wear the priestly garments – must neither dishevel the hair of his head nor tear his garments. **11** He must not go where there is any dead person; he must not defile himself even for his father and his mother. **12** He must not go out from the sanctuary and must not profane the sanctuary of his God, because the dedication of the anointing oil of his God is on him. I am the LORD. **13** He must take a wife who is a virgin. **14** He must not marry a widow, a divorced woman, or one profaned by prostitution; he may only take a virgin from his people as a wife. **15** He must not profane his children among his people, for I am the LORD who sanctifies him.”

16 The LORD spoke to Moses: **17** “Tell Aaron, ‘No man from your descendants throughout their generations who has a physical flaw is to approach to present the food of his God.

18 Certainly no man who has a physical flaw is to approach: a blind man, or one who is lame, or one with a slit nose, or a limb too long, **19** or a man who has had a broken leg or arm, **20** or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or one with a spot in his eye, or a festering eruption, or a feverish rash, or a crushed testicle. **21** No man from the descendants of Aaron the

priest who has a physical flaw may step forward to present the LORD's gifts; he has a physical flaw, so he must not step forward to present the food of his God. **22** He may eat both the most holy and the holy food of his God, **23** but he must not go into the veil-canopy or step forward to the altar because he has a physical flaw. Thus he must not profane my holy places, for I am the LORD who sanctifies them.'"

24 So Moses spoke these things to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites.

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 22:1-33

Leviticus 22 - More Specific Instructions for

Priests

A. Things that might defile a priest.

1. (1-3) The need for ceremonial purity.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they do not profane My holy name *by* what they dedicate to Me: I *am* the LORD. Say to them: 'Whoever of all your descendants throughout your generations, who goes near the holy things which the children of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he has uncleanness upon him, that person shall be cut off from My presence: I *am* the LORD.'"

a. **Who goes near the holy things which the children of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he has uncleanness upon him, that person shall be cut off:** Because the Old Covenant was a covenant of shadows and types, pointing to the glory of the New Covenant (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 8:4-5; 10:1), the idea that a priest could not minister in a ceremonially defiled (unclean) state was important. Israel needed to know that drawing close to God was to be pure.

2. (4-9) Examples of things that might defile a priest.

Whatever man of the descendants of Aaron, who *is* a leper or has a discharge, shall not eat the holy offerings until he is clean. And whoever touches anything made unclean *by* a corpse, or a man who has had an emission of semen, or whoever touches any creeping thing by which he would be made unclean, or any person by whom he would become unclean, whatever his

uncleanness may be; the person who has touched any such thing shall be unclean until evening, and shall not eat the holy *offerings* unless he washes his body with water. And when the sun goes down he shall be clean; and afterward he may eat the holy *offerings*, because it *is* his food. Whatever dies *naturally* or is torn *by beasts* he shall not eat, to defile himself with it: I *am* the LORD. They shall therefore keep My ordinance, lest they bear sin for it and die thereby, if they profane it: I the LORD sanctify them.

a. Shall not eat the holy offerings until he is clean:

Violations of these examples would not ruin a man's career as a priest. A violation would make the priest ceremonially unclean until evening. Once ceremonial cleanliness was restored, they could be restored to their priestly service as before.

b. And when the sun goes down he shall

be clean. The Jews start their days at sundown, not sunrise or midnight. With this

description, God indicates that one can start the new day clean and pure to the LORD. No matter how we might have failed the day before, we can begin each new day pure and close to the

LORD. His mercies are new every morning (Lam. 3:23).

i. In application, we can stop beating our self up for yesterday's sin. We should confess it, repent of it, and then get on with the business of walking with the LORD today.

3. (10-16) Only the priest and his household could eat of the offerings.

No outsider shall eat the holy *offering*; one who dwells with the priest, or a hired servant, shall not eat the holy thing. But if the priest buys a person with his money, he may eat it; and one who is born in his house may eat his food. If the priest's daughter is married to an outsider, she may not eat

of the holy offerings. But if the priest's daughter is a widow or divorced, and has no child, and has returned to her father's house as in her youth, she may eat her father's food; but no outsider shall eat it. And if a man eats the holy *offering* unintentionally, then he shall restore a holy *offering* to the priest, and add one-fifth to it. They shall not profane the holy *offerings* of the children of Israel, which they offer to the LORD, or allow them to bear the guilt of trespass when they eat their holy *offerings*; for I the LORD sanctify them.

a. If the priest buys a person with his

money, he may eat it: This means that a slave in the household of a priest could eat of the holy things, if the slave was purchased or born in his household. A **hired servant** (a temporary worker) was not considered part of the priest's household and therefore could not eat of the sacred offering.

i. Lev. 22:11 shows that a slave was considered part of the priest's household, and entitled to eat of the offerings. This shows us there was a different attitude towards slavery in Israel than in American history; slaves were considered - and largely treated as - part of the family.

b. For I the LORD sanctify them: This shows why the offerings had to be regarded with special care. These offerings were specially sanctified by the LORD.

B. Examples of unacceptable sacrifices.

1. (17-30) Unacceptable sacrifices.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them: 'Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, who offers his sacrifice for any of his vows or for any of his freewill offerings, which they offer to the LORD as a burnt offering; *you shall offer* of your own free will a male

without blemish from the cattle, from the sheep, or from the goats.

Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf. And

whoever offers a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, to fulfill *his* vow, or a freewill offering from the cattle or the sheep, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it. Those *that are* blind or broken or maimed, or have an ulcer or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them on the altar to the LORD. Either a bull or a lamb that has any limb too long or too short you may offer as a freewill offering, but for a vow it shall not be accepted. You shall not offer to the LORD what is bruised or crushed, or torn or cut; nor shall you make *any offering of them* in your land.

Nor from a foreigner's hand shall you offer any of these as the bread of your God, because their corruption *is* in them, *and* defects *are* in them.

They shall not be accepted on your behalf.'" And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "When a bull or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall be seven days with its mother; and from the eighth day and thereafter it shall be accepted as an offering made by fire to the LORD. *Whether it is* a cow or ewe, do not kill both her and her young on the same day. And when you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, offer *it* of your own free will. On the same day it shall be eaten; you shall leave none of it until morning: I *am* the LORD."

a. Whatever has a defect, you shall not

offer: Blemished or deformed animals were obviously unacceptable to the LORD, and the priests had a responsibility to make sure that the animals brought before them by the people were good enough to bring to the LORD. God didn't want the cast-offs from the people; He had right to their best.

i. Unfortunately, this practice was abused in the days of Jesus, where priests would

disqualify an animal for an insignificant reason, and then require them to purchase an approved sacrificial animal at an exorbitant price (Mat. 21:12-13).

ii. This also was a foreshadowing of Jesus, our perfect sacrifice. He was perfect in His nature as both God and man, perfect in His motive, perfect in His personality, perfect in His obedience, perfect in His sacrifice for sin on our behalf.

b. Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it shall not be acceptable on your behalf:

The prophet Malachi spoke out against those who brought God inferior animals: *You offer defiled food on My altar. But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the LORD is contemptible.' And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil?*

Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts. (Mal. 1:7-8)

c. From the eighth day and thereafter it shall be accepted as an offering: Also prohibited was an offering of an animal less than eight days old, and to sacrifice an animal and its offspring at the same time.

2. (31-33) Summary.

"Therefore you shall keep My commandments, and perform them: I *am* the LORD. You shall not profane My holy name, but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel. I *am* the LORD who sanctifies you, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD."

a. Therefore you shall keep My commandments, and perform them: God commanded Israel - and especially the priests - to keep His commandments and to honor His

name because of who He is (**I am the LORD**), because of what He is (**My holy name**), because of what He is doing (**I am the LORD who sanctifies you**), and what He has done (**who brought you out of the land of Egypt**).

b. **I am the LORD**: Surely, these four things are true of the believer in relation to God today - and are each valid and important reasons for obedience.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** “Tell Aaron and his sons that they must deal respectfully with the holy offerings of the Israelites, which they consecrate to me, so that they do not profane my holy name. I am the LORD. **3** Say to them, ‘Throughout your generations, if any man from all your descendants approaches the holy offerings which the Israelites consecrate to the LORD while he is impure, that person must be cut off from before me. I am the LORD. **4** No man from the descendants of Aaron who is diseased or has a discharge may eat the holy offerings until he becomes clean. The one who touches anything made unclean by contact with a dead person, or a man who has a seminal emission, **5** or a man who touches a swarming thing by which he becomes unclean, or touches a person by which he becomes unclean, whatever that person’s impurity - **6**

the person who touches any of these will be unclean until evening and must not eat from the holy offerings unless he has bathed his body in water. **7** When the sun goes down he will be clean, and afterward he may eat from the holy offerings, because they are his food. **8** He must not eat an animal that has died of natural causes or an animal torn by beasts and thus become unclean by it. I am the LORD. **9** They must keep my charge so that they do not incur sin on account of it and therefore die because they profane it. I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

10 “No lay person may eat anything holy. Neither a priest’s lodger nor a hired laborer may eat anything holy, **11** but if a

priest buys a person with his own money, that person may eat the holy offerings, and those born in the priest's own house may eat his food. **12** If a priest's daughter marries a lay person, she may not eat the holy contribution offerings, **13** but if a priest's daughter is a widow or divorced, and she has no children so that she returns to live in her father's house as in her youth, she may eat from her father's food, but no lay person may eat it.

14 "If a man eats a holy offering by mistake, he must add one fifth to it and give the holy offering to the priest.

15 They must not profane the holy offerings which the Israelites contribute to the LORD, **16** and so cause them to incur a penalty for guilt when they eat their holy offerings, for I am the LORD who sanctifies them."

17 The LORD spoke to Moses: **18** "Speak to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites and tell them, 'When any man from the house of Israel or from the foreigners in Israel presents his offering for any of the votive or freewill offerings which they present to the LORD as a burnt offering, **19** if it is to be acceptable for your benefit it must be a flawless male from the cattle, sheep, or goats. **20** You must not present anything that has a flaw, because it will not be acceptable for your benefit. **21** If a man presents a peace offering sacrifice to the LORD for a special votive offering or for a freewill offering from the herd or the flock, it must be flawless to be acceptable; it must have no flaw.

22 "'You must not present to the LORD something blind, or with a broken bone, or mutilated, or with a running sore, or with a festering eruption, or with a feverish rash.

You must not give any of these as a gift on the altar to the LORD. **23** As for an ox or a sheep with a limb too long or stunted, you may present it as a freewill offering, but it will not be acceptable for a votive offering. **24** You must not present to the LORD something with testicles that are bruised, crushed, torn, or cut off; you must not do this in your land. **25** Even from a foreigner you must not present

the food of your God from such animals as these, for they are ruined and flawed; they will not be acceptable for your benefit.'"

26 The LORD spoke to Moses: **27** "When an ox, lamb, or goat is born, it must be under the care of its mother seven days, but from the eighth day onward it will be acceptable as an offering gift to the LORD. **28** You must not slaughter an ox or a sheep and its young on the same day. **29** When you sacrifice a thanksgiving offering to the LORD, you must sacrifice it so that it is acceptable for your benefit. **30**

On that very day it must be eaten; you must not leave any part of it over until morning. I am the LORD.

31 "You must be sure to do my commandments. I am the LORD. **32** You must not profane my holy name, and I will be sanctified in the midst of the Israelites. I am the LORD who sanctifies you, **33** the one who brought you out from the land of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD."

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 23:1-44

Leviticus 23 - The Feasts of the LORD

A. Listing of the Feasts.

1. (1-3) The **Sabbath**.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, these *are* My feasts. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day *is* a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work *on it*; it *is* the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.'"

a. **The feasts of the LORD:** This chapter introduces us to the seven annual feasts Israel celebrated. These feasts are rich with symbolic and prophetic significance.

b. **The seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn**

rest: The Sabbath was not properly a feast, but like the feast days, it was a day set apart unto the LORD, and so a reminder regarding the Sabbath is here.

2. (4-5) The feast of **Passover**.

These *are* the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. On the fourteenth *day* of the first month at twilight *is* the Lord's Passover.

a. **On the fourteenth day of the first**

month: On the Jewish ceremonial calendar, the first month was known as Nisan; Passover was held on the fourteenth of Nisan each year.

b. **The Lord's Passover:** Passover was meant to commemorate Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and with the sacrifice of the lamb for each family, show how the blood of the lamb averted the judgment of God for each Israelite family.

3. (6-8) The feast of **Unleavened Bread**.

And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD;

seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD

for seven days. The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work *on it*.

a. **The Feast of Unleavened Bread to the**

LORD: The feast of unleavened bread was a week-long celebration the week immediately following Passover (from Nisan 15 to Nisan 21).

This feast showed the purity Israel was to walk in (illustrated by eating only bread without leaven, a type of sin) after the blood-deliverance of Passover.

4. (9-14) The feast of **firstfruits**.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.

He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. Its grain offering *shall be* two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering *shall be* of wine, one-fourth of a hin. You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings."

a. Then you shall bring a sheaf of the

firstfruits of your harvest to the priest: The day following Passover's Sabbath was a time to give the firstfruits of the harvest to God. The idea was to dedicate the first ripened stalks of grain to God, in anticipation of a greater harvest to come.

i. "The firstfruits at Passover would be barley, which ripens in the warmer areas as early as March." (Harris)

5. (15-21) The Feast of Pentecost (also called the Feast of Weeks).

And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. You shall bring from your dwellings two wave *loaves* of two-tenths *of an ephah*. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. *They are* the firstfruits to the LORD. And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be *as a* burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD. Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the

goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering.

The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits *as* a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. And you shall proclaim on the same day *that* it is a holy convocation to you.

You shall do no customary work *on it*. *It shall be* a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

a. **Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD:** Fifty days after the feast of firstfruits, at the completion of the wheat harvest, Israel was to celebrate the feast of Pentecost by bringing a **new grain offering to the LORD**; and by waving two loaves of *leavened* bread unto the LORD.

6. (22) Generosity to the poor and stranger.

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. **You shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap:** This repeats the command of Lev. 19:9-10; this was a law to provide a means for the poor and the stranger to eat by working for themselves and gleaning what was left behind. This was an appropriate reminder right after the law concerning the harvest feast of Pentecost.

7. (23-25) The Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah).

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first *day* of the month, you shall have a sabbath- *rest*, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work *on it*; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.'"

a. **A memorial of blowing of trumpets, a**

holy convocation: On the first day of the month Tishri on the Jewish ceremonial calendar, the feast of trumpets was held; trumpets were blown to gather together God's people for a **holy convocation**.

8. (26-32) The **Day of Atonement** (Yom Kippur).

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Also the tenth *day* of this seventh month *shall be* the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. And you shall do no work on that same day, for it *is* the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. For any person who is not

afflicted *in soul* on that same day shall be cut off from his people. And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. You shall do no manner of work; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It *shall be* to you a sabbath of *solemn* rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth *day* of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath."

a. **Also the tenth day of this seventh**

month shall be the Day of Atonement: On the tenth of Tishri, the people gathered again for a **holy convocation**; but this was not a celebration feast, but a day to **afflict your souls** in humble recognition of one's sin and need for atonement.

b. **And you shall afflict your souls:** The specific priestly procedures for the Day of

Atonement were described in Leviticus 16. This passage records the command for the people of Israel to set that day aside as a solemn day of reflection.

9. (33-44) The **Feast of Tabernacles** (Succoth).

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month *shall be* the Feast of Tabernacles *for* seven days to the LORD. On the first day *there shall be* a holy convocation.

You shall do no customary work *on it*. For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It *is* a sacred assembly, *and* you shall do no customary work *on it*. These *are* the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day; besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD. Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD *for* seven days; on the first day *there shall be* a sabbath- *rest*, and on the eighth day a sabbath- *rest*. And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.

You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. *It shall be* a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.'" So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

a. The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles: On the fifteenth day of the Jewish month Tishri (on the Jewish ceremonial calendar); the Feast of Tabernacles was a time to rejoice in God's deliverance and provision for Israel during the time of wilderness wandering; a time when having come into the promised land, looking back with gratitude on all God had done to

deliver and provide in the tough times of the wilderness.

b. On the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath rest:

The Feast of Tabernacles began and ended in rest; it was all about celebration and rest and refreshment.

i. We see here also the great *social* good God intended in the Sabbath and in the

Feasts; in other ancient cultures, there was no day off, and there were no holidays.

Here, God *commands* both holidays and "vacation days" - all centered on Him!

B. The prophetic significance of the feasts of Leviticus 23.

1. Structurally, the first four feasts are linked together, and the last three feasts are also linked -

and there is a separation of time between these two groups of feasts.

2. The group of the first four feasts relate to the work of Jesus in His first coming, of His earthly ministry.

a. The feast of *Passover* clearly presents Jesus as our Passover (1Co. 5:7), the Lamb of God who was sacrificed, and whose blood was

received and applied, so the wrath of God would pass us over.

b. The feast of *Unleavened Bread* relates time of Jesus' burial, after His perfect, sinless sacrifice on the cross, during which He was received by God the Father as holy and complete (the *Holy One* who would not *see corruption*, Act. 2:27), perfectly accomplishing our salvation.

i. We may regard the burial (or actually, entombment) of Jesus as a small thing in God's redemptive plan; but it was an

essential part of Paul's gospel: *For I*

delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. (1Co. 15:3-4) c. The feast of

Firstfruits relates to the resurrection of Jesus, who was the first human to receive resurrection; He is the *firstborn from the dead* (Col. 1:18) and *has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep* . . .

Christ the firstfruits, afterwards those who are Christ's at His coming. (1Co. 15:20, 23) d. The feast of *Pentecost* obviously is connected with the birth of the Church and the "harvest" resulting (Acts 2); significantly, in the ceremony at the feast of Pentecost, two *unleavened* loaves of bread are waved as a holy offering to God, speaking of the bringing of "unleavened"

Gentiles into the church.

3. Between the first set of four feasts and the second set of three feasts, there is a significant time gap - almost four months, which, significantly, was a time of *harvest* in Israel; even as our current age is a time of harvest for the church, *until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.* (Rom. 11:25)

4. The second group of the last three feasts relate to events connected with the second coming of Jesus.

a. The feast of *Trumpets* speaks of the ultimate assembly of God's people at the sound of a trumpet - the rapture of the Church (1Th. 4:16-17), and of the gathering of Israel for the special purpose God has for them in the last days.

b. The *Day of Atonement* not only speaks of the ultimate, perfect atonement Jesus offered on our behalf, but also of the affliction - and salvation - Israel will see during the Great Tribulation.

i. It will truly be a time when the soul of Israel is afflicted, but for their ultimate salvation; as Jer. 30:7 says regarding that period: *Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it, and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.*

c. The feast of *Tabernacles* speaks of the millennial rest of comfort of God for Israel and all of God's people; it is all about peace and rest, from beginning to end.

i. Tabernacles is specifically said to be celebrated during the millennium (Zec. 14:16-19).

5. Significantly, there is good evidence that each of the four feasts relevant to the first coming of Jesus saw their prophetic fulfillment on the exact day of the feast.

a. Jesus was actually crucified on the Passover (Joh. 19:14). His body would have been buried, and His holy and pure sacrifice acknowledged by God the Father during the Feast of

Unleavened Bread following, and He would have risen from the dead on Firstfruits, the day after Passover's Sabbath. Additionally, the church was founded on the actual day of Pentecost.

b. For this reason, many speculate it would be consistent for God to gather His people to

Himself at the rapture on the day of the feast of trumpets - on the Jewish holiday of Rosh

Hashanah. This can certainly be regarded as a possibility.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** "Speak to the Israelites and tell them, 'These are the LORD's appointed times which you must proclaim as holy assemblies - my appointed times: **3** "'Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there must be a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy assembly. You must not do any work; it is a Sabbath to the LORD in all the places where you live.

4 "'These are the LORD's appointed times, holy assemblies, which you must proclaim at their appointed time. **5** In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, is a Passover offering to the LORD. **6**

Then on the fifteenth day of the same month will be the festival of unleavened bread to the LORD; seven days you

must eat unleavened bread. **7** On the first day there will be a holy assembly for you; you must not do any regular work. **8** You must present a gift to the LORD for seven days, and the seventh day is a holy assembly; you must not do any regular work.”

9 The LORD spoke to Moses: **10** “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When you enter the land that I am about to give to you and you gather in its harvest, then you must bring the sheaf of the first portion of your harvest to the priest, **11** and he must wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for your benefit – on the day after the Sabbath the priest is to wave it. **12** On the day you wave the sheaf you must also offer a flawless yearling lamb for a burnt offering to the LORD, **13** along with its grain offering, two tenths of an ephah of choice wheat flour mixed with olive oil, as a gift to the LORD, a soothing aroma, and its drink offering, one fourth of a hin of wine.

14 You must not eat bread, roasted grain, or fresh grain until this very day, until you bring the offering of your God. This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all the places where you live.

15 “‘You must count for yourselves seven weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day you bring the wave offering sheaf; they must be complete weeks. **16**

You must count fifty days – until the day after the seventh Sabbath – and then you must present a new grain offering to the LORD. **17** From the places where you live you must bring two loaves of bread for a wave offering; they must be made from two tenths of an ephah of fine wheat flour, baked with yeast, as first fruits to the LORD. **18** Along with the loaves of bread, you must also present seven flawless yearling lambs, one young bull, and two rams. They are to be a burnt offering to the LORD along with their grain offering and drink offerings, a gift of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **19** You must also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two yearling lambs for a peace offering sacrifice, **20** and the

priest is to wave them – the two lambs – along with the bread of the first fruits, as a wave offering before the LORD; they will be holy to the LORD for the priest.

21 “On this very day you must proclaim an assembly; it is to be a holy assembly for you. You must not do any regular work. This is a perpetual statute in all the places where you live throughout your generations. **22** When you gather in the harvest of your land, you must not completely harvest the corner of your field, and you must not gather up the gleanings of your harvest. You must leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.”

23 The LORD spoke to Moses: **24** “Tell the Israelites, ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you must have a complete rest, a memorial announced by loud horn blasts, a holy assembly. **25** You must not do any regular work, but you must present a gift to the LORD.’”

26 The LORD spoke to Moses: **27** “The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It is to be a holy assembly for you, and you must humble yourselves and present a gift to the LORD. **28** You must not do any work on this particular day, because it is a day of atonement to make atonement for yourselves before the LORD your God. **29** Indeed, any person who does not behave with humility on this particular day will be cut off from his people. **30** As for any person who does any work on this particular day, I will exterminate that person from the midst of his people! **31** You must not do any work. This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all the places where you live. **32** It is a Sabbath of complete rest for you, and you must humble yourselves on the ninth day of the month in the evening, from evening until evening you must observe your Sabbath.”

33 The LORD spoke to Moses: **34** “Tell the Israelites, ‘On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the Festival of

Temporary Shelters for seven days to the LORD. **35** On the first day is a holy assembly; you must do no regular work.

36 For seven days you must present a gift to the LORD.

On the eighth day there is to be a holy assembly for you, and you must present a gift to the LORD. It is a solemn assembly day; you must not do any regular work.

37 “These are the appointed times of the LORD that you must proclaim as holy assemblies to present a gift to the LORD – burnt offering, grain offering, sacrifice, and drink offerings, each day according to its regulation, **38** besides the Sabbaths of the LORD and all your gifts, votive offerings, and freewill offerings which you must give to the LORD.

39 “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you gather in the produce of the land, you must celebrate a pilgrim festival of the LORD for seven days. On the first day is a complete rest and on the eighth day is complete rest. **40**

On the first day you must take for yourselves branches from majestic trees – palm branches, branches of leafy trees, and willows of the brook – and you must rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. **41** You must celebrate it as a pilgrim festival to the LORD for seven days in the year. This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you must celebrate it in the seventh month. **42** You must live in temporary shelters for seven days; every native citizen in Israel must live in temporary shelters, **43** so that your future generations may know that I made the Israelites live in temporary shelters when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.”

44 So Moses spoke to the Israelites about the appointed times of the LORD.

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 24:1-23

Leviticus 24 - The Law Put Into Action

A. Care for the Tabernacle.

1. (1-4) Care of the tabernacle lamps.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

"Command the children of Israel that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting, Aaron shall be in charge of it from evening until morning before the LORD continually; *it shall be* a statute forever in your generations. He shall be in charge of the lamps on the pure *gold* lampstand before the LORD continually."

a. **Pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually:** The lamps in the tabernacle - standing on the solid gold lampstand - were the only source of light for the tabernacle. They had to be tended to continually, supplied with pure olive oil and trimmed wicks, so they would continually give light.

b. **From evening until morning before the LORD continually:** Jesus never stopped being the *light of the world* (Joh. 8:12); He never took a break from it. As well, we are never to take a break from being *the light of the world* (Mat.

5:14), but we can only do this as we are continually supplied with oil (the Holy Spirit) and have our wicks trimmed (undergo training through trials).

2. (5-9) Care of the tabernacle bread.

And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it. Two-tenths *of an ephah* shall be in each cake. You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the pure *gold* table before the LORD.

And you shall put pure frankincense on *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, an offering made by fire to the LORD. Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD

continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it *is* most holy to him

from the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute.

a. You shall take fine flour and bake

twelve cakes with it: This bread of the tabernacle speaks of fellowship and communion with God - a symbolic "breaking bread" with God, and speaks of the continual fellowship God wanted with Israel.

i. This bread is called *showbread* in Exo.

25:30, which literally means "bread of the face" in the sense of it being eaten in the presence or before the face of God.

b. They shall eat it in a holy place:

Significantly, God wanted the fellowship fresh.

He didn't want a stale communion with His people, but a fresh, new relationship.

B. The case of the Egyptian blasphemer.

1. (10-12) The crime of the Egyptian blasphemer.

Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose

father *was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite *woman's* son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp. And the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the name *of the Lord* and cursed; and so they brought him to Moses. (His mother's name *was* Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) Then they put him in custody, that the mind of the LORD might be shown to them.

a. Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel:

This man, half Egyptian and half Hebrew, was part of the mixed multitude (Exo. 12:38) that went with Israel out of Egypt.

b. The Israelite woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed:

He committed the crime of *blasphemy*, which is to attack someone - especially God - with your words. It is somewhat like the modern idea of

"verbal abuse," but usually directed at God.

i. "In the Near East the name of a person was bound up intimately with his character, so that in the case of God, blasphemy was in effect an act of repudiation." (Harrison) ii. It seems that it was common for

Egyptians to curse their many gods. The root of this man's sin is he considers the LORD God of Israel on the same level as the petty Egyptian gods.

2. (13-16) The penalty for the Egyptian blasphemer.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard *him* lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him. Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name *of the Lord*, he shall be put to death.'"

a. **Then let all who heard him lay their**

hands on his head: In accord with the principle of Deu. 17:6-7. Two or three of the witnesses publicly laid hands on the accused, as a sure testimony to his guilt - and so the accused would know his accuser.

b. **And let all the congregation stone him:** God commanded execution by stoning for several reasons. First, stones were and are plentiful in Israel, so it was a ready means of execution. As well, it was so that the community could participate in the execution, for both a deterrent and a means of proclaiming, "This man has not only sinned against God, he has sinned against the community."

c. **Whoever blasphemes the name of the**

LORD shall surely be put to death: To keep themselves from blaspheming the name of the LORD, the Jews, in their traditions, went to extreme lengths to avoid saying or writing the name of God - because, in their thinking, you could not blaspheme God's name if you never said it.

i. So, only the High Priest was allowed to pronounce the holy name of God (*Yahweh*), and only once a year - on the day of atonement. The proper pronunciation of the name would be passed on from the high priest to his successor, with the former's last breath. This is why there was confusion for many years about the exact pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton (YHWH), some mistakenly pronouncing the name "Jehovah" instead of "Yahweh" or "Yah-veh."

ii. The Jews also did not write the name of God, because if that paper were destroyed, it might be considered blasphemy or taking the name of the LORD in vain. So, they would write *Adonai* ("Lord") instead of *Yahweh*, and instead of "God" write "G-d" and refer to God with names like "the Name" instead of saying "God."

3. (17-22) Provisions for law and order.

Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death. Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, animal for animal. If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor, as he has done, so shall it be done to him; fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he has caused disfigurement of a man, so shall it be done to him. And whoever kills an animal shall restore it; but whoever kills a man shall be put to death.

You shall have the same law for the stranger and for one from your own country; for I *am* the LORD your God.

a. Whoever kills any man shall surely be

put to death: In the context of giving the penalty for the Egyptian blasphemer, God stated a fundamental principle of His justice - crimes must be punished, but in proportion appropriate to the crime.

b. Fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth:

Many people have taken **eye for eye, tooth for tooth** as a command; instead, God intended it as a *limit* - so no man or judge would be able to make up his own punishment.

Human nature wants to hurt our attacker *worse* than they hurt us; God here puts a limit on the vengeful tendency of man.

i. Jesus rightly condemned the taking of this command regarding law and order in the community and applying it to personal relationships, where love, forgiveness, and going the extra mile - not equal retribution - is to be the rule (Mat. 5:38-42).

4. (23) The execution of the Egyptian blasphemer.

Then Moses spoke to the children of Israel; and they took outside the camp him who had cursed, and stoned him with stones. So the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

a. They took outside the camp him who

had cursed, and stoned him with stones: This verse is important. It demonstrates to us that the law of God was not given to Israel for interesting facts or mere guidelines; God expected them to obey it. Here, they obey even when it is difficult.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** "Command the Israelites to bring to you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually. **3** Outside the veil-canopy of the congregation in the Meeting Tent Aaron must arrange it from evening until morning before the LORD continually. This is a perpetual statute throughout your generations. **4** On the

ceremonially pure lampstand he must arrange the lamps before the LORD continually. **5** “You must take choice wheat flour and bake twelve loaves; there must be two tenths of an ephah of flour in each loaf, **6** and you must set them in two rows, six in a row, on the ceremonially pure table before the LORD. **7** You must put pure frankincense on each row, and it will become a memorial portion for the bread, a gift to the LORD. **8** Each Sabbath day Aaron must arrange it before the LORD continually; this portion is from the Israelites as a perpetual covenant.

9 It will belong to Aaron and his sons, and they must eat it in a holy place because it is most holy to him, a perpetual allotted portion from the gifts of the LORD.”

10 Now an Israelite woman’s son whose father was an Egyptian went out among the Israelites, and the Israelite woman’s son and an Israelite man had a fight in the camp.

11 The Israelite woman’s son misused the Name and cursed, so they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother’s name was Shelomith daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) **12** So they placed him in custody until they were able to make a clear legal decision for themselves based on words from the mouth of the LORD.

13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses: **14** “Bring the one who cursed outside the camp, and all who heard him are to lay their hands on his head, and the whole congregation is to stone him to death. **15** Moreover, you are to tell the Israelites, ‘If any man curses his God he will bear responsibility for his sin, **16** and one who misuses the name of the LORD must surely be put to death. The whole congregation must surely stone him, whether he is a foreigner or a native citizen; when he misuses the Name he must be put to death.

17 “‘If a man beats any person to death, he must be put to death. **18** One who beats an animal to death must make restitution for it, life for life. **19** If a man inflicts an injury on his fellow citizen, just as he has done it must be done to him

- **20** fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth - just as he inflicts an injury on another person that same injury must be inflicted on him. **21** One who beats an animal to death must make restitution for it, but one who beats a person to death must be put to death. **22**

There will be one regulation for you, whether a foreigner or a native citizen, for I am the LORD your God.”

23 Then Moses spoke to the Israelites and they brought the one who cursed outside the camp and stoned him with stones. So the Israelites did just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

1 The LORD spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai: Guzik - Leviticus 25:1-55

Leviticus 25 - Special Sabbaths and Jubilees

A. The Sabbath Year.

1. (1-2) The land and its Sabbath.

And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD.'"

a. **When you come into the land which I**

give you: The laws are given in faith; they are still in the wilderness, and not yet in the

Promised Land. And as far as Moses and the people knew, they were only a matter of months from entering in.

b. **The land shall keep a sabbath to the**

LORD: We are familiar with the idea of a sabbath of days, where one day out of seven is specially consecrated to God. This describes a Sabbath of years for the land, where the land receives a rest one year out of seven.

c. **Then the land shall keep a sabbath to**

the LORD: Obviously, this called Israel to a great deal of faith - they had to trust God that He would provide enough in the six years to see them through the seventh.

i. In the Feast of Tabernacles on the

Sabbath year, the law was to be read to all the people by the priests (Deu. 31:9-13). Each Sabbath year was also to be a time for an extensive Bible seminar for the whole nation.

2. (3-7) How to give the land its Sabbath.

Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, *for* it is a year of rest for the land. And the sabbath *produce* of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, for your livestock and the beasts that *are* in your land; all its produce shall be for food.

a. In the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land: This applied to both grain crops and fruit bearing plants; Israel was to do this as a radical demonstration that the land belonged to God, not to them.

i. "During the sabbatical year there must be no systematic harvesting of self-seeding crops, or such fruits as figs and grapes. Anything of this nature that the land produces without human aid is the property of all, and people are to obtain food wherever they can find it, just as the Israelites did in their wilderness wanderings." (Harrison)

b. And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you: It was also a powerful testimony of dependence on God;

Israel was declaring their belief that God would meet their needs.

i. It was also just plain good ecology! Giving the land a rest every seven years would help restore vital nutrients to the soil that normally would be depleted.

ii. Israel's failure to keep this command determined the length of their captivity; Lev. 26:34 says that if Israel is not obedient, God will make sure the land gets its Sabbaths by exiling the nation to an enemy land; this was fulfilled in the Babylonian captivity of Israel (2Ch. 36:20-21).

iii. Today, many observant Jews find a way around the Sabbath year law; on the seventh year, they "sell" their land to a Gentile, work it, and then "buy" it back from the Gentile when the Sabbath year is over.

The Gentile makes a little money, and the Jew can say, "It wasn't my land on the Sabbath year, so it was all right if I worked it."

B. The Year of Jubilee.

1. (8-12) The year of Jubilee to be observed every fiftieth year.

And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather *the*

grapes of your untended vine. For it *is* the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field.

a. **You shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years:** The year of Jubilee was somewhat like a Sabbath year, in the sense that crops were not planted, and the land was given a rest.

i. Many take the prophecy of Isa. 61:1-3 to speak of a Jubilee year. Since Jesus read this passage in a Nazareth synagogue at the beginning of His ministry, some have speculated that Jesus' ministry began in a year of Jubilee - though it was mostly not observed among the Jews at that time.

b. **You shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants:** Our founding fathers were aware of the principle of the year of Jubilee and the freedom associated with it; **proclaim liberty throughout all the land** is inscribed on the Liberty Bell that hangs in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

2. (13-17) In the year of Jubilee, the land went back to its original family.

In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another. According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you *according* to the number *of the years* of the crops. Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I *am* the LORD your God.

a. **In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession:** When Israel came into the Promised Land,

the land was allotted according to tribes and families. These initial tracts of land would be the permanent possession of those families, and therefore land in Israel could never really be "sold" - it could only be leased, and the amount of the lease would be based on how many years there were left until the Jubilee.

i. This assured that no family would be permanently prevented from having land. Every fifty years, every family would have the opportunity to start again.

b. Therefore you shall not oppress one

another: Though this was extremely charitable and helpful to the families in Israel, this was not a socialist system, because only land was re-distributed. Most effectively, this helped protect against the existence of a permanent underclass in Israel.

i. We don't know for a fact that the Year of Jubilee was ever actually observed. "Just how widely the concept of the jubilee year was observed through the history of the Israelites is difficult to state for lack of direct evidence." (Harrison)

3. (18-22) God's provision for the Sabbath year.

So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them; and you will dwell in the land in safety. Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety. And if you say, "What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?" Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat *of* the old *harvest*.

a. So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them;

and you will dwell in the land in safety: God promised that if Israel obeyed Him, He would provide so much on the sixth year, that they will not only be supplied for the seventh year when they give the land rest, but they will also be eating the produce of the sixth year some three years later.

b. Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year: If we obey God - even when it doesn't make sense - we can trust He will provide our every need. If we seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, all those practical things will be added unto us! (Mat. 6:33)

C. Rules regarding the redemption of property.

1. (23) The fundamental principle.

The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land *is* Mine; for you *are* strangers and sojourners with Me.

a. For the land is Mine: The land of Israel belongs to the LORD, and He is free to distribute it as He wills - therefore, if He decreed it should stay in certain families, that is how it should be done!

b. The land shall not be sold permanently: So, the land could be leased, but never sold - and the lease would always be up in the year of Jubilee. In addition, the lease could be bought out at any time by a *kinsman-redeemer* (Lev. 25:25).

c. For you are strangers and sojourners with Me: This was an important way God reminded Israel that their real home was in heaven with Him, and that they were only strangers and visitors to this earth - even as Christians are today (2Pe. 2:11; Heb. 11:13).

2. (24-28) The role of the kinsman-redeemer.

And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land. If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold *some* of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold. Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it, then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession. But if he is not able to have *it* restored to himself, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; and in the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession.

a. In all the land of your possession you

shall grant redemption of the land: This redemption of the land was accomplished

through the **kinsman-redeemer** (Hebrew:

goel). He was a designated close relative who had the right (and responsibility) to buy the poor out of their poverty and loss.

i. The *goel* is also a wonderful picture of Jesus, our **kinsman-redeemer** who purchased us from the "slave market" of sin (Rom. 3:24; 1Co. 6:20).

ii. The book of Ruth describes a kinsman-redeemer transaction; when Naomi returned from Moab, poor and in debt, her nearest kinsman-redeemer was willing to buy back the land for her, but stopped short when he found he would also have to marry Ruth and raise up an heir for the property. When this nearest kinsman-redeemer balked, Boaz was the next closest kinsman-redeemer, and stepped right in out of love for Ruth (Ruth 3).

b. In the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession: If the **kinsman-redeemer** was

unable to buy his brother out of debt, the land would return to the debtor at the year of Jubilee.

3. (29-34) The exception for urban real estate.

If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; *within* a full year he may redeem it. But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations. It shall not be released in the Jubilee. However the houses of villages which have no wall around them shall be counted as the fields of the country. They may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the Jubilee.

Nevertheless the cities of the Levites, *and* the houses in the cities of their possession, the Levites may redeem at any time. And if a man purchases a house from the Levites, then the

house that was sold in the city of his possession shall be released in the Jubilee; for the houses in the cities of the Levites *are* their possession among the children of Israel. But the field of the common-land of their cities may not be sold, for it *is* their perpetual possession.

a. If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold: The laws of property as described in previous verses did not apply to urban real estate (**in a walled city**); it applied to rural land where for most, the land was more than a place to live, it was a place to earn one's livelihood.

b. The house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it: In cities, property was pretty much just a place to live - so, this property could be bought or sold more freely, without the same restrictions which applied to the original allotments of land given to Israel when they came into the Promised Land.

c. If a man purchases a house from the Levites, then the house that was sold in

the city of his possession shall be released in the

Jubilee: However, there was an exception to the exception regarding urban real estate: The property of the Levites would be

theirs forever, redeemable at any time, in a city or in a rural area.

D. Care of the poor.

1. (35-38) Lending to the poor.

If one of your brethren becomes poor, and falls into poverty among you, then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you. Take no usury or interest from him; but fear your God, that your brother may live with you. You shall not lend him your money for usury, nor lend him your food at a profit. I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan *and* to be your God.

a. **If one of your brethren becomes poor:** These commands specifically prohibit making money of the misfortune of a poor brother; instead of making profit off of his misery, the command is simple: **You shall help him.**

b. **Take no usury or interest from him; but fear your God, that your brother may live with you:** Jesus made a similar command in Luk. 6:34, when He asked what credit is it to us if we give to or help only those whom we know can help us back.

2. (39-46) When a Hebrew becomes a slave because of debt.

And if *one of* your brethren *who dwells* by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave. As a hired servant *and* a sojourner he shall be with you, *and* shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. And *then* he shall depart from you; he and his children with him; and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers. For they *are* My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as

slaves. You shall not rule over him with rigor, but you shall fear your God. And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have; from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy

male and female slaves. Moreover you may buy the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property. And you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them as* a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves. But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor.

a. **You shall not compel him to serve as a**

slave: In the Mosaic law, if one chronically could not pay his debts, he would have to work off the debt as a servant of his creditor. But these laws command fair, just and compassionate treatment of any Jewish man so unfortunate.

b. **Shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee:** Not only must such a servant be released when his debt was paid, but he also must be released at the year of Jubilee.

c. **And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have; from the nations that are around you, from them you may**

buy male and female slaves: Foreign slaves among the Jews did not have the same rights as Hebrew slaves sold into servitude because of debt; they could be held as slaves for life,

though they had to be treated humanely (Exo. 20:8-11; 21:20-21).

3. (47-55) Redeeming a Hebrew slave from a foreigner.

Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and *one of* your brethren *who dwells* by him becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger *or* sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger's family, after

he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him; or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him; or *anyone* who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him; or if he is able he may redeem himself. Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years, from the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee; *it shall be* according to the time of a hired servant for him. If *there are* still many years *remaining*, according to them he shall repay the price of his redemption from the money with which he was bought. And if there remain but a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he shall reckon with him, *and* according to his years he shall repay him the price of his redemption. He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant, and he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight. And if he is not redeemed in these *years*, then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee; he and his children with him. For the children of Israel *are* servants to Me; they *are* My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God.

a. After he is sold he may be redeemed

again: As in the redemption of land, the kinsman-redeemer would buy the Hebrew slave out of servitude if he could, and the price was reckoned in relation to the year of Jubilee.

b. The children of Israel are servants to

Me: God cared so much about the matters simply because first and foremost, each Israelite was to be the slave of the LORD.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** "Speak to the Israelites and tell them, 'When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land must observe a Sabbath to the LORD. **3** Six years you may sow your field, and six years you may prune your vineyard and gather the produce, **4** but in the seventh year the land must have a Sabbath of complete rest - a Sabbath to the

LORD. You must not sow your field or prune your vineyard. **5** You must not gather in the aftergrowth of your harvest and you must not pick the grapes of your unpruned vines; the land must have a year of complete rest. **6** You may have the Sabbath produce of the land to eat – you, your male servant, your female servant, your hired worker, the resident foreigner who stays with you, **7** your cattle, and the wild animals that are in your land – all its produce will be for you to eat.

8 “You must count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, and the days of the seven weeks of years will amount to forty-nine years. **9** You must sound loud horn blasts – in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, on the Day of Atonement – you must sound the horn in your entire land. **10** So you must consecrate the fiftieth year, and you must proclaim a release in the land for all its inhabitants. That year will be your jubilee; each one of you must return to his property and each one of you must return to his clan. **11** That fiftieth year will be your jubilee; you must not sow the land, harvest its aftergrowth, or pick the grapes of its unpruned vines. **12**

Because that year is a jubilee, it will be holy to you – you may eat its produce from the field.

13 “In this year of jubilee you must each return to your property. **14** If you make a sale to your fellow citizen or buy from your fellow citizen, no one is to wrong his brother. **15** You may buy it from your fellow citizen according to the number of years since the last jubilee; he may sell it to you according to the years of produce that are left. **16** The more years there are, the more you may make its purchase price, and the fewer years there are, the less you must make its purchase price, because he is only selling to you a number of years of produce. **17** No one is to oppress his fellow citizen, but you must fear your God, because I am the LORD your God. **18** You must obey my statutes and my

regulations; you must be sure to keep them so that you may live securely in the land.

19 “‘The land will give its fruit and you may eat until you are satisfied, and you may live securely in the land. **20** If you say, ‘What will we eat in the seventh year if we do not sow and gather our produce?’ **21** I will command my blessing for you in the sixth year so that it may yield the produce for three years, **22** and you may sow the eighth year and eat from that sixth year’s produce – old produce.

Until you bring in the ninth year’s produce, you may eat old produce. **23** The land must not be sold without reclaim because the land belongs to me, for you are foreigners and residents with me. **24** In all your landed property you must provide for the right of redemption of the land.

25 “‘If your brother becomes impoverished and sells some of his property, his near redeemer is to come to you and redeem what his brother sold. **26** If a man has no redeemer, but he prospers and gains enough for its redemption, **27** he is to calculate the value of the years it was sold, refund the balance to the man to whom he had sold it, and return to his property. **28** If he has not prospered enough to refund a balance to him, then what he sold will belong to the one who bought it until the jubilee year, but it must revert in the jubilee and the original owner may return to his property.

29 “‘If a man sells a residential house in a walled city, its right of redemption must extend until one full year from its sale; its right of redemption must extend to a full calendar year. **30** If it is not redeemed before the full calendar year is ended, the house in the walled city will belong without reclaim to the one who bought it throughout his generations; it will not revert in the jubilee. **31** The houses of villages, however, which have no wall surrounding them must be considered as the field of the land; they will have the right of redemption and must revert in the jubilee. **32**

As for the cities of the Levites, the houses in the cities which they possess, the Levites must have a perpetual right of

redemption. **33** Whatever someone among the Levites might redeem – the sale of a house which is his property in a city – must revert in the jubilee, because the houses of the cities of the Levites are their property in the midst of the Israelites. **34** Moreover, the open field areas of their cities must not be sold, because that is their perpetual possession. **35** “If your brother becomes impoverished and is indebted to you, you must support him; he must live with you like a foreign resident. **36** Do not take interest or profit from him, but you must fear your God and your brother must live with you. **37** You must not lend him your money at interest and you must not sell him food for profit. **38** I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan – to be your God.

39 “If your brother becomes impoverished with regard to you so that he sells himself to you, you must not subject him to slave service. **40** He must be with you as a hired worker, as a resident foreigner; he must serve with you until the year of jubilee, **41** but then he may go free, he and his children with him, and may return to his family and to the property of his ancestors. **42** Since they are my servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt, they must not be sold in a slave sale. **43** You must not rule over him harshly, but you must fear your God.

44 “As for your male and female slaves who may belong to you – you may buy male and female slaves from the nations all around you. **45** Also you may buy slaves from the children of the foreigners who reside with you, and from their families that are with you, whom they have fathered in your land, they may become your property. **46**

You may give them as inheritance to your children after you to possess as property. You may enslave them perpetually. However, as for your brothers the Israelites, no man may rule over his brother harshly.

47 “If a resident foreigner who is with you prospers and your brother becomes impoverished with regard to him so

that he sells himself to a resident foreigner who is with you or to a member of a foreigner's family, **48** after he has sold himself he retains a right of redemption. One of his brothers may redeem him, **49** or his uncle or his cousin may redeem him, or anyone of the rest of his blood relatives – his family – may redeem him, or if he prospers he may redeem himself. **50** He must calculate with the one who bought him the number of years from the year he sold himself to him until the jubilee year, and the cost of his sale must correspond to the number of years, according to the rate of wages a hired worker would have earned while with him. **51** If there are still many years, in keeping with them he must refund most of the cost of his purchase for his redemption, **52** but if only a few years remain until the jubilee, he must calculate for himself in keeping with the remaining years and refund it for his redemption. **53** He must be with the one who bought him like a yearly hired worker. The one who bought him must not rule over him harshly in your sight. **54** If, however, he is not redeemed in these ways, he must go free in the jubilee year, he and his children with him, **55** because the Israelites are my own servants; they are my servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God. **1** “You must not make for yourselves idols, so you must not set up for yourselves a carved image or a pillar, and you must not place a sculpted stone in your land to bow down before it, for I am the LORD your God.

Guzik - Leviticus 26:1-46

Leviticus 26 - Blessings and Curses

A. Blessings and curses for Israel.

1. (1-13) Blessings for obedience.

You shall not make idols for yourselves; neither a carved image nor a *sacred* pillar shall you rear up for yourselves; nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I *am* the LORD your God. You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the LORD. If you

walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make *you* afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land. You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you. For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you. You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new. I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that *you* should not be their slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright.

a. If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I

will give you rain in its season: God was determined to reveal Himself to the world

through Israel, either by making them so blessed, the world would know only God could have blessed them so; or by making them so cursed, that only God could have cursed them and cause them to still survive. The choice was up to Israel.

b. And confirm My covenant with you: As a literary form, this chapter is similar to ancient treaties between a king and his people; this is God the King, making a covenant with His people, Israel.

i. "In the ancient Near East it was customary for legal treaties to conclude with passages containing blessings upon those who observed the enactments, and curses upon those who did not." (Harrison)

c. **Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight:** This clearly speaks of a Divine blessing.

These remarkable promises clearly have a supernatural element.

i. The principle behind that particular blessing is remarkable; the ratio of five to one hundred is one routing twenty; but the ratio of one hundred to ten thousand is one routing one hundred.

ii. Gideon's 300 defeated 135,000 Midianites; Jonathan and his armor bearer alone defeated a Philistine army.

d. **I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall**

be My people: The best promises are saved for last: First, that Israel would enjoy a special relationship with God. If not for this, all the material blessings described previously would be empty.

i. When Israel walked after the LORD, these blessings were real; one example of this is when the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon and saw a nation so blessed, she knew it had to be of God (1Ki. 10:1-13).

e. **I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright:** This final

blessing speaks of freedom and dignity. This passage almost feels like the New Testament, God proclaims the liberty of His people and then invites them to walk in it.

2. (14-39) Curses for disobedience.

But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments,

but break My covenant, I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow

your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you. And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit. Then, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins. I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate. And if by these things you are not reformed by Me, *but* walk contrary to Me,

then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied. And after all this, if you do not obey Me, *but* walk contrary to Me, then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for

your sins. You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols; and My soul shall abhor you. I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. Then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you *are* in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths. As long as *it* lies desolate it shall rest; for the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it. And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee; they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues. They shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when no one pursues; and you shall have no *power* to stand before your enemies.

You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also in their fathers'

iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away.

a. If you do not obey Me . . . after all this, if you do not obey Me . . . if by these things you are not reformed by Me, but

walk contrary . . . after all this, if you do not obey Me: These verses describe a progression of rebellion. God brought these

curses slowly to a disobedient Israel, desiring repentance; but if Israel would not repent, the curses intensified.

b. I will punish you yet seven times for

your sins: Significantly, God does not say He will forsake Israel, only that they will be cursed.

Sadly, these curses became the tragic story of Israel's history - defeat, deprivation, exile, desolation, and disease all too often have marked Israel's past.

i. Even the horrific cannibalism described in Lev. 26:29 was fulfilled in 2Ki. 6:26-29;

Josephus also describes cannibalism in Jerusalem when under siege by the Romans; a woman killed and ate her own baby son (*Wars*, 6.3.4).

3. (40-46) The blessings of repentance.

But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, and that they also have walked contrary to Me, and *that* I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt; then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land. The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes. Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them; for I *am* the LORD their God. But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I *am* the LORD.'" These *are* the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

a. **If they confess their iniquity and the**

iniquity of their fathers: This displays the greatness of God's mercy. Despite how cursed Israel might be, God would always remember, receive, and bless a repentant Israel.

b. When they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor shall I abhor them, to utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them:

This also applies to Christians under the New Covenant. God will always be faithful to the covenant, for the sake of the covenant we have with God through Jesus.

B. Blessing and cursing in a New Covenant perspective.

1. Are we under the same covenant of blessing and cursing? To some, Gal. 6:7 demonstrates this: *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.* But in context, Paul is not promoting some law of spiritual "karma"

that ensures we will get good when we do good, or always get bad when we do bad (such an absolute law would damn us all); instead he speaks simply about the management of our resources (see Gal. 6:6-10).

a. What Paul is simply saying is this: We may fool ourselves by expecting much when we sow little, but we cannot fool God, and the results of our poor sowing will be evident.

2. Gal. 3:13-14 makes it clear: Jesus received this curse upon Himself as He hung on the cross, fulfilling the Deu. 21:23 promise of a curse to all who are not only executed but have their bodies publicly exposed to shame.

a. In the Jewish mind, such exposure was a fate worse than death itself; the humiliation brought upon the executed and their family was clear evidence of the curse.

3. Jesus bore the curse that we (even Gentiles) might bear the blessings of Abraham (the blessing of righteousness and life by faith) - but these blessings only come to those *in Christ Jesus*.

a. So, we are blessed not because of obedience, but because we are in Christ Jesus; and there is no more curse for us from God, because all the curse was borne by Jesus.

b. This does not deny the chastening hand of God; but the correction of a loving parent is good and desirable, though not pleasant at the time (Heb. 12:7-11).

c. Nor does it deny the cause-and-effect nature of sin in our world; sin often carries with its own curse, which in some ways is distinct from God's direct curse upon us.

4. These blessings and curses may be necessary motivation for the carnal man, but it is not the ground God wants us live on - believing Jesus didn't bear all the curses we deserved, and believing we can be blessed in any other way than in Christ Jesus.

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission **2** You must keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary. I am the LORD.

3 “If you walk in my statutes and are sure to obey my commandments, **4** I will give you your rains in their time so that the land will give its yield and the trees of the field will produce their fruit. **5** Threshing season will extend for you until the season for harvesting grapes, and the season for harvesting grapes will extend until sowing season, so you will eat your bread until you are satisfied, and you will live securely in your land. **6** I will grant peace in the land so that you will lie down to sleep without anyone terrifying you. I will remove harmful animals from the land, and no sword of war will pass through your land. **7** You will pursue your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword. **8** Five of you will pursue a hundred, and a hundred of you will pursue ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the

sword. **9** I will turn to you, make you fruitful, multiply you, and maintain my covenant with you.

10 You will still be eating stored produce from the previous year and will have to clean out what is stored from the previous year to make room for new.

11 “I will put my tabernacle in your midst and I will not abhor you. **12** I will walk among you, and I will be your God and you will be my people. **13** I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from being their slaves, and I broke the bars of your yoke and caused you to walk upright.

14 “If, however, you do not obey me and keep all these commandments – **15** if you reject my statutes and abhor my regulations so that you do not keep all my commandments and you break my covenant – **16** I for my part will do this to you: I will inflict horror on you, consumption and fever, which diminish eyesight and drain away the vitality of life. You will sow your seed in vain because your enemies will eat it. **17** I will set my face against you. You will be struck down before your enemies, those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee when there is no one pursuing you.

18 “If, in spite of all these things, you do not obey me, I will discipline you seven times more on account of your sins. **19** I will break your strong pride and make your sky like iron and your land like bronze. **20** Your strength will be used up in vain, your land will not give its yield, and the trees of the land will not produce their fruit.

21 “If you walk in hostility against me and are not willing to obey me, I will increase your affliction seven times according to your sins. **22** I will send the wild animals against you and they will bereave you of your children, annihilate your cattle, and diminish your population so that your roads will become deserted.

23 “If in spite of these things you do not allow yourselves to be disciplined and you walk in hostility against me, **24** I

myself will also walk in hostility against you and strike you seven times on account of your sins. **25**

I will bring on you an avenging sword, a covenant vengeance. Although you will gather together into your cities, I will send pestilence among you and you will be given into enemy hands. **26** When I break off your supply of bread, ten women will bake your bread in one oven; they will ration your bread by weight, and you will eat and not be satisfied.

27 “If in spite of this you do not obey me but walk in hostility against me, **28** I will walk in hostile rage against you and I myself will also discipline you seven times on account of your sins. **29** You will eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters. **30** I will destroy your high places and cut down your incense altars, and I will stack your dead bodies on top of the lifeless bodies of your idols.

I will abhor you. **31** I will lay your cities waste and make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will refuse to smell your soothing aromas. **32** I myself will make the land desolate and your enemies who live in it will be appalled. **33** I will scatter you among the nations and unsheathe the sword after you, so your land will become desolate and your cities will become a waste.

34 “Then the land will make up for its Sabbaths all the days it lies desolate while you are in the land of your enemies; then the land will rest and make up its Sabbaths.

35 All the days of the desolation it will have the rest it did not have on your Sabbaths when you lived on it.

36 “As for the ones who remain among you, I will bring despair into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. The sound of a blowing leaf will pursue them, and they will flee as one who flees the sword and fall down even though there is no pursuer. **37** They will stumble over each other as those who flee before a sword, though there is no pursuer, and there will be no one to take a stand for you before your

enemies. **38** You will perish among the nations; the land of your enemies will consume you.

39 “As for the ones who remain among you, they will rot away because of their iniquity in the lands of your enemies, and they will also rot away because of their ancestors’ iniquities which are with them. **40** However, when they confess their iniquity and their ancestors’

iniquity which they committed by trespassing against me, by which they also walked in hostility against me **41** (and I myself will walk in hostility against them and bring them into the land of their enemies), and then their uncircumcised hearts become humbled and they make up for their iniquity,

42 I will remember my covenant with Jacob and also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. **43**

The land will be abandoned by them in order that it may make up for its Sabbaths while it is made desolate without them, and they will make up for their iniquity because they have rejected my regulations and have abhorred my statutes. **44** In spite of this, however, when they are in the land of their enemies I will not reject them and abhor them to make a complete end of them, to break my covenant with them, for I am the LORD their God. **45** I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought out from the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations to be their God. I am the LORD.”

46 These are the statutes, regulations, and instructions which the LORD established between himself and the Israelites at Mount Sinai through Moses.

1 The LORD spoke to Moses:

Guzik - Leviticus 27:1-34

Leviticus 27 - The Redemption of Things Vowed

to God

A. Consecrating persons to the LORD.

1. (1-2) **When a man consecrates by a vow certain persons to the LORD.**

Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When a man consecrates by a vow certain persons to the LORD, according to your valuation,'"

a. **When a man consecrates by a vow**

certain persons to the LORD: What did it mean to consecrate a person to the LORD? It could be done either for one's self, or on behalf of another (such as consecrating a child unto the LORD). This was a completely voluntary act, meant to demonstrate that this person was totally given to God.

i. For example, a man from the tribe of Judah, in a time of distress, or out of gratitude, or out of a sense of calling, wants to consecrate his son to the LORD. He could not give his son to the service of the tabernacle, because he was not a priestly family. So to consecrate his son, he would follow the procedures in the following verses.

b. **When a man consecrates by a vow**

certain persons to the LORD: The beauty of these commands is that it gave the one making a vow of consecration something definite to *do*; the vow of consecration was therefore far more than mere words, it had a definite action associated with it - and prevented people from making empty vows to God.

2. (3-8) Assigning a valuation for persons consecrated by a vow.

If your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old, then your valuation shall be fifty shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. If it *is* a female, then your valuation shall be thirty shekels; and if from five years old up to twenty years old, then your valuation for a male shall be twenty shekels, and for a female ten shekels; and if from a month old up to five years old, then your valuation for a male shall be five shekels of silver, and for a female your valuation shall be three shekels of silver; and if from sixty years old and above, if *it is* a male, then your valuation shall be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels. But if he is too poor to pay your valuation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall set a value for him; according to the ability of him who vowed, the priest shall value him.

a. If your valuation is of a male from twenty years old up to sixty years old: Persons were assigned a value according to their age and general usefulness to society;

especially in an agricultural society, there was a definite sense in which a man between 20 and 50 was more "valuable" than a child one month to five years old.

b. If he is too poor to pay your valuation: Importantly, no one was prohibited from fulfilling a vow of consecration because they did not have enough money; if they were poor, the priests would be flexible with the valuation.

i. *Everyone* can give their life to the LORD; there are none who are too small, or too insignificant, or too useless. God wants to

use each and every one.

B. Redeeming property consecrated to God by a vow.

1. (9-13) Animals.

If *it is* an animal that men may bring as an offering to the LORD, all that *anyone* gives to the LORD shall be holy. He shall not substitute it or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good; and if he at all exchanges animal for animal, then

both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy. If *it is* an unclean animal which they do not offer as a sacrifice to the LORD, then he shall present the animal before the priest; and the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as you, the priest, value it, so it shall be.

But if he *wants* at all *to* redeem it, then he must add one-fifth to your valuation.

a. If it is an animal that men may bring as an offering to the LORD: If an animal was clean (fit for sacrifice), and you wanted to redeem it from the vow of consecration to the LORD (perhaps because the animal was especially useful), you could exchange it for another animal - as long as that animal was also clean, and equally suitable for sacrifice.

b. If it is an unclean animal: If an animal was unclean (unfit for sacrifice), it could still be vowed to the LORD and then redeemed; but the priest would set a value on the animal, and one would add one-fifth to that value (20%) and give the total to the tabernacle treasury.

i. Again, if one simply wanted to give their unclean animal (a donkey, for example) to the LORD, he could give it to a priest, who would use it or sell it, giving the money to the tabernacle treasury; but if they desired to keep the animal, while still consecrating it with a vow to the LORD, they had to pay the price of the animal plus 20%.

You could give

your donkey and use him too, but it would cost you the value of the donkey plus 20%.

3. (14-25) Houses and land.

And when a man dedicates his house *to be* holy to the LORD, then the priest shall set a value for it, whether it is good or bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand. If he who dedicated it *wants to* redeem his house, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall be his. If a man dedicates to the LORD *part* of a field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to the

seed for it. A homer of barley seed *shall be valued* at fifty shekels of silver. If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand. But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the priest shall reckon to him the money due according to the years that remain till the Year of Jubilee, and it shall be deducted from your valuation. And if he who dedicates the field ever wishes to redeem it, then he must add one-fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it shall belong to him. But if he does not want to redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore; but the field, when it is released in the Jubilee, shall be holy to the LORD, as a devoted field; it shall be the possession of the priest. And if a man dedicates to the LORD a field which he has

bought, which is not the field of his possession, then the priest shall reckon to him the worth of your valuation, up to the Year of Jubilee, and he shall give your valuation on that day *as a holy offering* to the LORD. In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to the one who *owned* the land as a possession. And all your valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs to the shekel.

a. When a man dedicates his house to be

holy to the LORD: With a house, as in the case with an unclean animal, if a man wanted to consecrate by a vow the house to the LORD, while still using it, the priest would set a value on the house, and one would add one-fifth to that value (20%), and give the total to the tabernacle treasury.

b. If he dedicates his field: For land, its value was based on its potential production, as well as the number of years until the Year of Jubilee.

4. (26-27) Redemption of the consecration vow for the firstborn.

But the firstborn of the animals, which should be the Lord's firstborn, no man shall dedicate; whether *it is* an ox or sheep, it *is* the Lord's. And if *it is* an unclean animal, then he shall redeem *it* according to your valuation, and shall add one-fifth to it; or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to your valuation.

a. **But the firstborn of the animals, which should be the Lord's firstborn, no man shall dedicate:** Since the first born already belonged to God (Exo. 13:2), you could not "buy it back" from the LORD; if it was a clean animal, it had to be sacrificed.

b. **It shall be sold according to your valuation:** However, an unclean animal could either be sold or "bought back" from the LORD.

5. (28-29) One cannot redeem things or persons **devoted** to the LORD.

Nevertheless no devoted *offering* that a man may devote to the LORD of all that he has, *both* man and beast, or the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted *offering is* most holy to the LORD. No person under the ban, who may become doomed to destruction among men, shall be redeemed, *but* shall surely be put to death.

a. **Every devoted offering is most holy to the LORD:** To **devote** something to the LORD

was a further step than consecration by a vow; it often had the meaning of destroying the item (or executing the person) so that it could not be used by any one else, and all of its value was given to God.

i. Jos. 6:17, among other passages, translates this word **devoted** with the word *accursed* - because that thing devoted to God would be destroyed, being used for no other purpose.

b. **Nevertheless no devoted offering that a man may devote to the LORD of all that he has:**

For these reasons, an item **devoted** to God could not be "bought back" by giving its value plus 20% to the

tabernacle treasury; it had to be given - and presumably destroyed - unto the LORD.

c. **No person under the ban, who may**

become doomed to destruction among

men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death: In this sense also, one could not escape execution by being "bought back"

from the LORD; they had to face the penalty for their crime.

6. (30-33) The payment of tithes.

And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the Lord's. It *is* holy to the LORD. If a man wants at all to redeem *any* of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it. And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD. He shall not inquire whether it is good or bad, nor shall he exchange it; and if he exchanges it at all, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.

a. **If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it:** Tithes could also be "bought back" from the LORD; instead of tithing good seed from a field, a farmer could pay the value of the seed plus 20%.

7. (34) Conclusion: **These are the**

commandments which the LORD

commanded.

These *are* the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai.

a. **These are the commandments:** These were not mere traditions and customs, though men began to attach traditions and customs to these commandments; these were - and are - the commandments (not suggestions) of the LORD.

b. **Which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel on Mount Sinai:** As we have seen before in Leviticus, the phrase **before the LORD** occurs more than 60 times - more than any other book in the Bible. What happens in Leviticus happens **before the LORD**, and every point of obedience it calls us to illustrates - either in specific command or in precious picture - how to walk **before the LORD**.

i. "READER, thou hast now gone through the whole of this most interesting book; a book whose subject is too little regarded by Christians in general. Here thou mayest discover the rigid requisitions of Divine justice, the sinfulness of sin, the exceeding breadth of the commandment, and the end of all human perfection . . . By this law then is the *knowledge*, but not the *cure* of sin . . . We see then that Christ was the END of the law for *righteousness* (for *justification*) to every one that believeth." (Clarke)

© 2004 David Guzik - No distribution beyond personal use without permission

2 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘When a man makes a special votive offering based on the conversion value of persons to the LORD, **3** the conversion value of the male from twenty years old up to sixty years old is fifty shekels by the standard of the sanctuary shekel. **4** If the person is a female, the conversion value is thirty shekels. **5**

If the person is from five years old up to twenty years old, the conversion value of the male is twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels. **6** If the person is one month old up to five years old, the conversion value of the male is five shekels of silver, and for the female the conversion value is three shekels of silver. **7** If the person is from sixty years old and older, if he is a male the conversion value is fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels. **8** If he is too poor to pay the conversion value, he must stand the person before the priest and the priest will establish his conversion value; according to what the man who made the vow can afford, the priest will establish his conversion value.

9 “‘If what is vowed is a kind of animal from which an offering may be presented to the LORD, anything which he gives to the LORD from this kind of animal will be holy. **10**

He must not replace or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good, and if he does indeed exchange one animal for another animal, then both the original animal and its substitute will be holy. **11** If what is vowed is an unclean animal from which an offering must not be presented to the LORD, then he must stand the animal before the priest, **12** and the priest will establish its conversion value, whether good or bad. According to the assessed conversion value of the priest, thus it will be. **13** If, however, the person who made the vow redeems the animal, he must add one fifth to its conversion value.

14 “‘If a man consecrates his house as holy to the LORD, the priest will establish its conversion value, whether good or

bad. Just as the priest establishes its conversion value, thus it will stand. **15** If the one who consecrates it redeems his house, he must add to it one fifth of its conversion value in silver, and it will belong to him.

16 “If a man consecrates to the LORD some of his own landed property, the conversion value must be calculated in accordance with the amount of seed needed to sow it, a homer of barley seed being priced at fifty shekels of silver.

17 If he consecrates his field in the jubilee year, the conversion value will stand, **18** but if he consecrates his field after the jubilee, the priest will calculate the price for him according to the years that are left until the next jubilee year, and it will be deducted from the conversion value. **19** If, however, the one who consecrated the field redeems it, he must add to it one fifth of the conversion price and it will belong to him. **20** If he does not redeem the field, but sells the field to someone else, he may never redeem it. **21** When it reverts in the jubilee, the field will be holy to the LORD like a permanently dedicated field; it will become the priest’s property.

22 “If he consecrates to the LORD a field he has purchased, which is not part of his own landed property, **23** the priest will calculate for him the amount of its conversion value until the jubilee year, and he must pay the conversion value on that jubilee day as something that is holy to the LORD.

24 In the jubilee year the field will return to the one from whom he bought it, the one to whom it belongs as landed property. **25** Every conversion value must be calculated by the standard of the sanctuary shekel; twenty gerahs to the shekel.

26 “Surely no man may consecrate a firstborn that already belongs to the LORD as a firstborn among the animals; whether it is an ox or a sheep, it belongs to the LORD. **27** If, however, it is among the unclean animals, he may ransom it according to its conversion value and must add one fifth to

it, but if it is not redeemed it must be sold according to its conversion value.

28 “Surely anything which a man permanently dedicates to the LORD from all that belongs to him, whether from people, animals, or his landed property, must be neither sold nor redeemed; anything permanently dedicated is most holy to the LORD. **29** Any human being who is permanently dedicated must not be ransomed; such a person must be put to death.

30 “Any tithe of the land, from the grain of the land or from the fruit of the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD. **31** If a man redeems part of his tithe, however, he must add one fifth to it. **32** All the tithe of herd or flock, everything which passes under the rod, the tenth one will be holy to the LORD. **33** The owner must not examine the animals to distinguish between good and bad, and he must not exchange it. If, however, he does exchange it, both the original animal and its substitute will be holy. It must not be redeemed.”

34 These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses to tell the Israelites at Mount Sinai.